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THE

RIVER [redacted] EN SAND

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THE

RIVER OF GOLDEN SAND

THE NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY THROUGH CHINA AND EASTERN TIBET TO BURMAH

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
AND DRAWINGS FROM ORIGINAL SKETCHES

BY CAPT. WILLIAM GILL, ROYAL ENGINEERS

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

BY COL. HENRY YULE, C.B., R.E.

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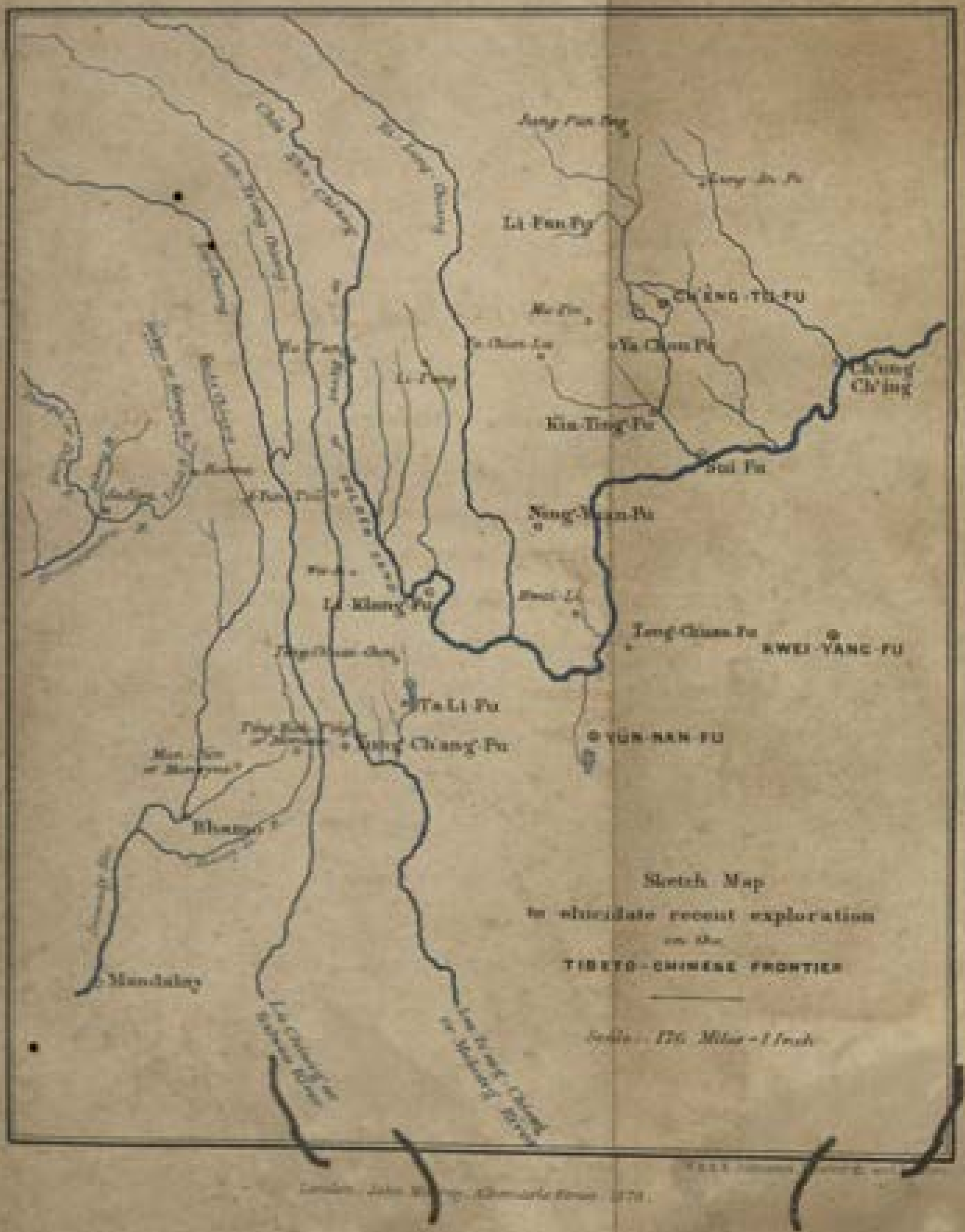
Li Fan Py
CH'ENG-TU-FU
Ya Chow Fu
Kia-Ting Fu
Suai Fu
Nong-Kwan-Pu
Tong-Chuan Fu
KWEI-YANG-FU
Ta-Li Fu
YUN-NAN-FU
Sketch Map
to elucidate recent exploration
on the
TIBETO-CHINESE FRONTIER

ILLUSTRATIONS and MAPS to VOL. I.

MOUNT LIEH-SHAN-LIANG, IN MONGOLIA . . . *Frontispiece*

THE FERRY . . . . . *Title-page*

SKETCH MAP TO ELUCIDATE RECENT EXPLORATION ON THE TIBETO-CHINESE FRONTIER . . . *To face page* [18]

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GENERAL MAP OF CHINA . . . . . *In pocket at end*

Errata in Vol. I.

Page 10 line 15 } *for* 'Yang-Tzŏ' *read* 'Yang-Tzŭ.'
" 13 " 12 }
" 22 line 25, *for* 'was not a very good walker' *read* 'was a good walker.'
" 24 note, *for* 'two mulecarts,' *read* 'two-mule carts.'
" 46 " 14, *for* 'was' *read* 'were.'
" 50 " 23, *for* 'plain hot water' *read* 'plain water almost boiling.'
" 58 " 8 *for* 'Tan-Ho' *read* 'San-Ho.'
" 58 " 3 from foot. The date '*September* 28' belongs to the preceding paragraph.
" 67 " 3 from foot, *for* 'Po-lo-Tai' *read* 'Po-Lo-Tai.'
" 74 " 2, *for* 'N.N.E.' *read* 'N.N.W.'
" 74 " 10, *for* 'N.W.' *read* 'N.E.'
" 75 " 11, *for* 'gevas' *read* 'jivas.'
" 76 " 18, *for* 'was it' *read* 'it was.'
" 120. The cut belongs to the preceding page.
" 127 line 2 from foot to page 129 line 8. This matter has been misplaced. It should be a note to page 263.
" 149 note, *for* 'May 6' *read* 'page 306.'
" 165 lines 12 and 15, *for* 'Rath'ang' *read* 'Rat'ang.'
" 176 line 18, *for* 'Ch'ang-Ch'ing' *read* 'Ch'ung-Ch'ing.'
" 178 " 15. The semicolon should be after the word 'China,' not after the word 'Sŭ-Ch'uan.'
" 192 " 4, *for* 'birds' *read* 'buds.'
" 252 " 7 from foot, *for* 'Wu-Shan' *read* 'Wu-Yang.'
" 255 " 5, *for* 'hole' *read* 'hold.'
" 267 heading, *for* 'Bishop Provôt' *read* 'Monsieur Provôt.'
" 316 " 23, *for* 'Sieh T'ais' *read* 'Hsieh-T'ais.'
" 351 " 14, *for* 'Sieh-T'ai' *read* 'Hsieh-T'ai.'
" 367 " 9 from foot, *for* 'twinkling' *read* 'tinkling.'
" 368 " 2 from foot, the date, June 2, should be inserted here.
" 381 " 2 from foot, *for* 'Wing Cave Pass' *read* 'Wind Cave Pass.'
" 385 line 27, *for* 'has' *read* 'had.'
" 386 " 21, *for* 'planted' *read* 'flaunted.'
" 393 " 16. The passage should read thus: 'Running between partly cultivated mountains, the peaks of which are about 2,000 feet high.'
" 394 " 7, *for* 'them' *read* 'it.'
" 398 " 6 from foot, *for* 'fostering' *read* 'festering.'
" 419 " 18. The sentence 'A little further we came to,' &c., should be 'A little further we came to a temple,' &c.

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

§ 1. My friends, the author and the publisher of this work, have called on me to write a preface to it. I confess to a strong interest in the book, which I have seen through the press from first to last, during Captain Gill's absence on duty in the Levant. That is, indeed, an office which nature does not easily permit to be done by deputy; and I am told that I have left some of his flowers only planted, when they ought to have flaunted, and his banners to flatter when they ought to flutter, whilst I have made his bells to twinkle when they only tinkled.

But my interest in the journey which the book relates began long before the book was even an embryo, and with the first hour of my acquaintance with its author. Three years and a half ago, he was indeed well known to me by name as a brother officer who had been an enterprising traveller on the Turkoman frontier of Persia, and a still more enterprising candidate for a metropolitan borough. But we had never met when, in the end of May 1876, Captain Gill visited me at the India Office, and announced that he was meditating an expedition, by way of Western China, into either Eastern Turkestan or Tibet.

Though I had during many years past travelled much in those regions, my journeys had been accomplished in the spirit only, not in the body—those of

the latter character never having extended into regions more remote than Ava in one direction, and Java in another; hence I was gratified by the motive of Captain Gill's visit, and did my best to justify it. This was not so much by any information that I could furnish, or suggestions that I could venture,—except, indeed, that of making Marco Polo his bosom friend, a hint that he has cherished and acted upon throughout his travels,—as by introducing him to two men who could advise him from singular practical experience, I mean Baron Ferdinand v. Richthofen, and the late Mr. T. T. Cooper.

§ 2. Of Baron Richthofen I will venture to quote words written on another occasion:

'It is true that the announcement of his presence at the evening meetings (of the Royal Geographical Society) would draw no crowds to the doors; no extra police would be required to keep the access; no great nobles would interest themselves about engaging St. James's Hall for his reception . . . but it is a fact that in his person are combined the great traveller, the great physical geographer, and the accomplished writer, in a degree unknown since Humboldt's best days. In the actual extent of his journeys in China, he has covered more ground than any other traveller of note, and he has mapped as he went. His faculty of applying his geological knowledge to the physical geography of the country he traverses is very remarkable, but not more so than his power of lucid and interesting exposition.'[1] Baron Richthofen's advice and information were communicated with a fulness and cordiality which Captain Gill has recorded near the beginning of his book.

[1] Letter to Sir Rutherford Alcock, then President of the Royal Geographical Society, of which an extract was read by him at the annual meeting, May 27, 1878.

Mr. Cooper, though far from any pretension to be classed as a traveller with the one just spoken of, has been justly characterised as one of the most adventurous explorers of modern times; and had himself made two bold attempts to force that Tibetan barrier, which remains yet unpierced, between India and China: once from the side of Ssŭ-ch'uan, and once again from the side of Assam. And it is a circumstance worthy to be noted here, that whilst Mr. Cooper (it was in my room in the India Office) was one of the last persons with whom Captain Gill took counsel regarding his journey before quitting England, it was the same Mr. Cooper who received the traveller with open arms and hearty hospitality at Bhamò, when he emerged from the wilds of the Chinese frontier in November 1877. A few months later (April 24, 1878), poor Cooper, in his solitary residence at Bhamò, was murdered by a soldier of his native guard.

§ 3. The 'general reader,' whose eye may be caught by the title of this work, will not, we trust, be misled by the familiar melody of Bishop Heber to suppose that the traveller will conduct him to 'Afric's sunny fountains.' The 'River of Golden Sand' is a translation of the name *Kin-sha-Kiang*, or (in the new orthography in which I find it hard to follow my author) *Chin-Sha-Chiang* (Gold-Sand-River), by which the Chinese, or at least Chinese geographers, style the great Tibetan branch of the Yang-tzŭ, down at least to its junction, at Sŭ-chau (or Swi-fu, as it is now called), with the Wen or Min River, descending from Ssŭ-ch'uan. Of other names we shall speak a little below.

It is proposed now to indicate some of the points of geographical interest in the little known region of which the River of Golden Sand is as it were the axis,—that region of Eastern Tibet which intervenes between

the two great historic continents of India and China,—and to sketch the history of explorations in this tract previous to that of Captain Gill. If in this task I sometimes use words that I have used before, on one or other of the somewhat frequent occasions that this dark region, from which the veil lifts but slowly, has attracted me,[2] let me be forgiven. And all the more one may overcome scruples at such repetition in seeing how persistent error is. Within the last few months I have read of 'an able argument' (I certainly did not read the argument itself) to prove the identity of the Tibetan Tsanpu and the Irawadi. Life seems too short for the study of able demonstrations that the moon is made of green cheese, but, if these are still to be proffered, there can be no harm in stating the facts again.

I do not forget the pungent words with which Abbé Huc concludes his sparkling *Souvenirs d'un Voyage*: 'Quoiqu'il soit arrivé au savant Orientaliste, J. Klaproth, de trouver *l'Archipel Potocki*, sans sortir de son cabinet, il est en général assez difficile de faire des découvertes dans un pays sans y avoir pénétré.'[3] But as regards a large part of the country of which I am going to speak we are all on a level, for no one has seen it, not even the clever Abbé himself and his companion; and of *geographical* information regarding the region in question, they can hardly be said to have brought anything back.

[2] E.g., in a review of Huc and Gabet in *Blackwood*, 1852; in connexion with the *Narrative of Major Phayre's Mission to Ava* (Calcutta 1856, London 1858); in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal for* 1861, p. 367; in the notes to *Marco Polo*; and in various papers in *Ocean Highways* and the *Geographical Magazine*, and discussions in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*.

[3] The name of Potocki Islands was given by Klaproth in honour of Count Potocki, under whom he had served on a Russian mission to Peking, to a group of eighteen islands in the Gulf of Corea. This sheet of the Jesuit map of China had been mislaid or omitted when D'Anville engraved it. Klaproth afterwards became owner of the missing tracing, and on it, *sans sortir de son cabinet*, found these islands, and claimed their discovery.

§ 4. Everyone who has looked at a map of Asia with his eyes open must have been struck by the remarkable aspect of the country between Assam and China, as represented, where a number of great rivers rush southward in parallel courses, within a very narrow span of longitude, their delineation on the map recalling the fascis of thunderbolts in the clutch of Jove, or (let us say, less poetically) the aggregation of parallel railway lines at Clapham Junction.

Reckoning these rivers from the westward, the first of importance (i.) is the Subanshiri, which breaks through the Himalya, and enters the valley of Assam in long. 94° 9′. This is a great river, and undoubtedly comes from Tibet, i.e. from Lhassa territory. Some good geographers have started the hypothesis that the Subanshiri, rather than the Dihong, is the outflow of the Tsanpu; but recent information shows this to be impossible.

§ 5. The next of these great rivers (ii.) is the Dihong, which enters Assam in long. 95° 17′, and joins the Lohit—or proper Brahmaputra—near Sadiya. Though the identity of this river with the great river of Central Tibet, the Yaru Tsanpu, has never yet been continuously traced as a fact of experience, every new piece of evidence brings us nearer to assurance of the identity, and one might be justified in saying that no reasonable person now doubts it. This was the belief of Rennell, who first recognised the magnitude of the Brahmaputra, long before we had any knowledge of the Dihong, or of the manner and volume of its emergence from the Mishmi Hills.[4] Many years,

[4] 'On tracing this river in 1765, I was no less surprised at finding it rather larger than the Ganges than at its course previous to its entering Bengal. This I found to be from the east; although all the former accounts represented it as from the north; and this unexpected discovery soon led to inquiries, which furnished me with an account of its general course to within 100 miles of the place where Du Halde left the Sanpoo. I could no longer doubt that the *Burrampooter* and *Sanpoo* were one and the same river, and to this was added the positive assurances of the Assamers "that *their* river came from the north-west, through

however, before Rennell's work was published, in fact twelve years before Rennell was born, P. Orazio della Penna, writing in Tibet (1730), had stated that the river was then believed to join the Ganges, explaining (from such maps as were available to him in those days) 'towards Rangamatti and Chittagong.' A conjecture to the same effect occurs in the memoir on the map of Tibet, by Père Regis, at the end of du Halde. Giorgi, in his *Alphabetum Tibetanum* (Rome, 1762), says the like.[5] The same view is distinctly set forth in the geography of Tibet which is translated in the 14th volume of the great French collection of *Mémoires concernant les Chinois*, a document compiled by order of the Emperor K'ang-hi, and issued, with others of like character, in 1696. This represents the Yaru Tsanpu as rising to the west of Tsang (West Central Tibet), passing to the north-east of Jigar-Kungkar (south of Lhassa), flowing south-east some 400 miles, and then issuing at the south of Wei (or U, East Central Tibet) into the region of the *Lokhaptra*, 'tattooed people' (*i.e.* Mishmis *et hoc genus omne*); then turning south-west it enters India, and discharges into the southern sea (pp. 177-178).

The Pundit Nain Singh, on the journey to Lhassa which first made him famous (1865), was told by Nepalese, Newars, and Kashmiris at that city, that the great river of Tibet was the Brahmaputra; whilst all the natives who were questioned also declared that, after flowing east for a considerable distance, it

the Bootan Mountains."'—*Mem. of a Map of Hindoostan*, 3rd edition, pp. 356–7, see also p. 259. Rennell's actual knowledge of the Brahmaputra extended only to long. 91°, a few miles above Goalpara, but his sketch of the probable entrance of the river from Tibet is very like the truth. On the other hand, it is curious how he was misled as to the source of the Ganges, which he identified with what are really the upper waters of the Indus and Sutlej. The importance of the Dihong was first pointed out by Lieutenant Wilcox in 1826 in the *Calcutta Gazette*. (See *As. Res.* xvii.)

[5] '*Sese tandem in Gangem exonerat.*' But Giorgi's information was derived from della Penna and the other Capuchins.

flowed down into India. The Pundit's information on his last great journey, when he crossed the river somewhat further to the eastward, before striking south into Assam, did not add much, but it was all in corroboration of the same view.[6] And this is still further confirmed by the latest report of exploration from the Chief of the Indian surveys. We have only a sketch of this exploration, and await the details with great interest. But we learn that the explorer (N——m—g) took up the examination of the Tsanpu at Chetang, where it was crossed by Nain Singh on his way from Lhassa to Assam (in about long. 91° 43′, lat. 29° 15′), and followed it a long way to the eastward. He found that the river, before turning south, flows much further east than had been supposed, and even north-east. It reaches its most northerly point in about long. 94°, and lat. 30°, some 12m. to the north-east of Chamkar. The river then turns due south-east, but the explorer was not able to follow it beyond a place, 15 miles from the great bend, called *Gya-la Sindong*. There, however, he saw that it flowed on for a great distance, passing through a considerable opening in the mountain ranges, to the west of a high peak called *Jung-la*. Chamkar appears in D'Anville's map as Tchamka, and in one of Klaproth's[7] as *Temple Djamga*, in a similar position with regard to the river. And Gya-la Sindong seems to be the *Temp. Sengdam* of the latter map, standing just at the head of the '*defilé Sing-ghian Khial*,' by which Klaproth carried off the waters of the Tsanpu into the Irawadi. If the position of Gya-la Sindong as determined by the explorer is correct, its direct distance from the highest

[6] See *Journal of Royal Geographical Society*, xlvii. p. 116. It is remarkable that the information collected by the Pundit on his first journey was most accurate as to the position where the river turns to the south, which he placed in about long. 94°. (See Montgomerie, in *J. R. G. S.*, xxxviii. p. 218, *note*.) His later conclusion was less accurate.

[7] In vol. iii. of his *Mémoires relatifs à l'Asie*.

point hitherto fixed on the Dihong river from the Assam side is only about 100 miles.[8]

§ 6. We have mentioned above that some have supposed the Subanshiri to be the real continuation of the Tsanpu. The idea seems to have been grounded in part on an exaggerated estimate of the volume of the Subanshiri, and partly on Nain Singh's indications (in 1874) of the course of the Tsanpu, which seemed to bring it in such close juxtaposition to the Subanshiri as to allow no room for the development of another river of such volume as was attributed to the latter. The last of these foundations for the theory has been removed by the new explorer (N—m—g)'s extended journey, carrying the south-eastern bend of the Tsanpu so much further to the East; and the first also was erroneous. Careful and detailed observations by Lieut. Harman in 1877-78 give the comparative volumes of the Assam rivers with which we have to do, at their mean low level, as follows :—

	Cubic feet per second.		Cubic feet per second.
Dihong . . .	55,400	Dihong and Dibong before union with Bramahputra ('Lohit') . .	82,652
Brahmaputra ('Lohit') above Sadiya . .	33,832		
Ditto at the Brahma-Kund . .	25,000	The combined (Brahmaputra) river at Dibrúgarh .	116,115
Dibong . . .	27,202	The Subanshiri .	16,945

We see here how the Dihong vastly surpasses in discharge not only the Subanshiri, but also the Lohit Brahmaputra and the Dibong, while both greatly exceed the Subanshiri.[9]

[8] This is just the space at which Rennell, 100 years ago, estimated the unknown gap. (See p. [19] above.)

[9] It is of some interest to compare these measurements with those made by Bedford and Wilcox in 1825–26. They were as follows (see *Asiatic Researches*, vol. xvii., but I take them from J.A.S.B. xxix. p. 182):—

	December 26, 1825.	March 29, 1826.
Dihong (after a correction) .	(*a*) 56,000 ft.	
Brahmaputra at Sadiya . .	(*b*) 19,058 ft.	(*a*) 33,965 ft.
Dibong	(*b*) 13,100 ft.	
Dihong and Dibong . .	69,664 ft.	(*a*) 86,211 ft.
Subanshiri, 'in dry season' .	(*a*) 16,000 ft.	

§ 7. Very eminent geographers have, however, not been content to accept the view of the identity of the Tsanpu and the Brahmaputra, and several have contended that the Irawadi of Burma was the true continuation of the great Tibetan River. D'Anville, I believe, was the first to start this idea.[1] It was repeated by our countryman Alexander Dalrymple, the compiler of the 'Oriental Repertory' and much else, the founder of the Hydrographic Department of the Admiralty, and a very able geographer, in a map on a small scale which he put together for the illustration of Symes's 'Mission to Ava' (1800). The idea was maintained at a later date with great force and insistence by that remarkable and erratic genius Julius Klaproth, who in demonstration played fast and loose on a great scale with latitudes and longitudes, and produced Chinese documents from the days of the T'ang dynasty to those of K'ang-hi in corroboration. His dissertation in its latest form[2] is, like almost everything that Klaproth wrote, of high interest. We need not, as some other things in his career suggest, doubt the genuineness of the Chinese documents. Some of them at least are to be found translated in independent works before his time. But everything is not necessarily true that is written in Chinese, any more than everything that is written in Persian —or even in Pushtu! Chinese writers find leisure to speculate on geographical questions as well as Europeans. And some of them, finding, on the one

The close approximation in those marked (*a*) to Lieutenant Harman's recent measurements is remarkable; whilst in (*b*) the discrepancy is great. All Lieut. Harman's measurements were taken in March. In some the rivers had risen, and the low level discharge was arrived at by calculation. But it is a pity that no notice is taken of the older measurements in the publication of the recent ones. The suggestion of the facts on the surface is that the recent observations do not represent the lowest level, or that the rivers in December 1825 were unusually low.

[1] *Éclaircissements Géographiques sur la Carte de l'Inde*, Paris, 1753, p. 146.

[2] *Mémoires relatifs à l'Asie*, vol. iii.

hand, the Tsanpu flowing through Tibet, and disappearing they knew not whither, and finding, on the other, the Irawadi coming down into Burma from the north, issuing they knew not whence, adopted a practice well known to geographers (to Ptolemy, be it said, *pace tanti viri*, not least) long before Dickens humorously attributed it to one of the characters in Pickwick,—they 'combined the information,' and concluded that the Tsanpu and the Irawadi were one. Klaproth's view that this was so, and that the actual influx took place near Bhamò, was adopted by many Continental geographers, and staggered even the judicious Ritter. Maps were published in accordance with the theory, some bringing the waters of Tibet into the Irawadi by the Bhamò River (down which Captain Gill floated in Mr. Cooper's boat on the last day's journey which he has recorded), and others through the Shwéli, which enters the Irawadi some eighty miles below Bhamò.

§ 8. It seems hardly worth while now to slay this hypothesis, which was moribund before, but must be quite dead since the report of N—m—g's exploration. Its existence was somewhat prolonged, especially in France, by the fact that some of the missionaries in Eastern Tibet, of whom we shall speak presently, had carried out with them elaborate maps, compiled under the influence of Klaproth's theory; and the ideas derived from these had so impregnated their minds that in communicating geographical information which they had collected on the scene of their labours it was confused and tinged by the errors of Klaproth.

The main bases for what we may style the orthodox theory of the Irawadi are found in the constant belief of natives above and below the Tibetan passes, and in the evidence of direction and volume. The lamented Col. T. G. Montgomerie, in his most able analysis of the Pundit Nain Singh's first journey,

deduced from the particulars recorded by the latter, and a careful oral catechisation, that the discharge of the Tsanpu, where crossed below Jigatze (or Jigarchi), could hardly be less than 35,000 feet per second. We see that the discharge of the Dihong, on its emergence from the hills of Assam into the plains of Assam is 55,400 feet. These are in reasonable ratio. Now the discharge of the Irawadi, so far down as the head of the Delta, is not more than 75,000 feet, and at Amarapura it cannot, on the best data available, be much more than the 35,000 feet attributed to the Tsanpu on the table-land of Tibet, at a point which would be at least 1,200 miles above Ava along the banks, if the theory of identity were true.[3]

§ 9. The third river (iii.) is the Dibong, which joins the Dihong before its confluence with the Brahmaputra. This has, on Mr. Saunders's map of Tibet accompanying Mr. Markham's book, been identified with the Ken-pu, one of the rivers of Tibet delineated on D'Anville's map. The Ken-pu, however, we shall see strong evidence for identifying with a different river, whilst there is positive reason to believe that the Dibong, in spite of its large discharge, does *not* come from Tibet. At a meeting of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1861, at which I read a paper connected with this subject, Major (now Major-General) Dalton stated that the people of Upper Assam admitted only two of their rivers to come from Tibet, viz. the Dihong and the (Lohita) Brahmaputra. An attempt was made in 1878 by Captain Woodthorpe, R.E., who has done much excellent work in the survey of the Eastern Frontier, to explore the sources of the Dibong. He was not successful in penetrating far up the river, but he

[3] See Appendix to *Narrative of Mission to the Court of Ava* (Major Phayre's), pp. 356 *seq.*; and a paper by Major-General A. Cunningham in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. xxix., pp. 175 *seq.*

considered himself to have derived, from extensive views, and native information in connection with them, 'a fairly accurate knowledge of the sources of 'the Dibong, and the course of its main stream in the 'hills;'[4] and in the map representing this knowledge the river is indicated as having no source further north than about 28° 52′.

§ 10. We next come to the (iv.) true Brahmaputra, or Lohit, which enters Assam at the Brahmakund, or Sacred Pool of Brahma. This I believe to be identical with the Gak-bo of the Tibetan geographies, and the Ken-pu, or Kang-pu, of D'Anville and the Chinese.

Granted, as we may now assume, that the Tsanpu is the Dihong, the Ken-pu can hardly be other than either the Dibong or the Lohit. We have seen that the Dibong does not come from Tibet. But there is a very curious piece of evidence that the Ken-pu is the Lohit.

I have just alluded to a paper connected with our present subject which was read at Calcutta in 1861. This was a letter from Monseigneur Thomine des Mazures, 'Vicar Apostolic of Tibet,' and then actually residing in Eastern Tibet, to Bishop Bigandet of Rangoon (himself well known for his works on Burmese Buddhism, &c., and who had been very desirous to establish direct communication with his brethren in the north), and which contained some interesting geographical notices, though they were, as has been already indicated, impaired in value by the erroneous ideas as to the Tsanpu, gathered from Klaproth, with which French maps were then affected.[5] The paper was read with a comment by the present writer.[6]

[4] Letter of Captain Woodthorpe, dated Shillong, August 10, 1878, forwarded by the Government of India, in their letter of October 31 *id.*

[5] Particularly the map on which Bishop Thomine relied, of *Andriveau Goujon*, Paris, 1841.

[6] See *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. xxx. pp. 367 *seq.*

Now in this letter Bishop Thomine spoke of the series of rivers in question, beginning with the Lan-t'sang, or Mekong, and travelling westward. Next to the Lantsang was the Lu-ts' Kiang (Lu-Kiang or Salwen). Beyond that the Ku-ts' Kiang, of which we shall speak presently, and then the *Gak-bo Tsanpu*, 'called by the Chinese *Kan-pu-tsangbo*.' The Bishop, influenced by his Klaprothian map, stated this to join the Irawadi. And this would only have made confusion double but for a circumstance which he proceeded to mention. 'In that district,' he wrote, 'according to the Tibetans, is the village of Sâmé, where our two priests, MM. Krick and Boury, were murdered.' Here was a fact that no theories could affect. These two gentlemen were, in the autumn of 1854, endeavouring to make their way to Tibet from Upper Assam, by the route up the Lohit, attempted fourteen years later by Mr. T. T. Cooper, when they were attacked and murdered by a Mishmi chief called Kaïsa. On the receipt of this intelligence, and after a detailed account of the circumstances had been obtained from the servant of the priests, a party was despatched by the Assam authorities into the Mishmi country to capture the criminal chief. This was very dexterously and successfully effected by Lieutenant Eden, who was in command. In the beginning of March Kaïsa and some of his party were taken, and were tried and convicted by Major Dalton. Dr. Carew, the Roman Catholic archbishop, interceded with the Governor-General for a mitigation. But Kaïsa was hanged. It is an old story, but so creditable to several concerned that it has seemed well worth being briefly told here.

Now the place at which these two travellers were

The Bishop's letter as sent to the Society had been done into English, and not always lucid English. In my present quotations I have corrected this.

murdered was *Simé, on the banks of the* (Lohit) *Brahmaputra*, a place entered from native information in Wilcox's map some thirty years before, and some fifteen or sixteen miles above the place where Cooper was turned back in 1869.

I can hardly conceive of better evidence than this regarding a country unexplored by European travellers, and I have repeatedly adduced it in proof that the Gak-bo or Ken-pu is identical with the Lohit, and that the latter comes from Tibet. This, too, being established, there remains no possibility of communication between the Tsanpu and the Irawadi, unless the Tsanpu pass athwart the basin of the Brahmaputra.[7]

Thus, singular to say, from the blood of those two missionary priests, spilt on the banks of the Lohita (the 'Blood-red'), is moulded the one firm link that we as yet possess, binding together the Indian and the Chinese geography of those obscure regions.

§ 11. (v.) In the Chinese maps, and in Bishop Thomine des Mazures' list of rivers, there comes next a river variously called *Tchitom* (D'Anville), *Tchod-teng*, or *Schété* (Des Mazures) Chu, all probably variations of the same name, and also *Ku-ts' Kiang* (Des Mazures), and in Klaproth's map the *Khiu-shi-Ho*. This river, which he calls 'rather inconsiderable,' the Bishop identifies with the Lung-Kiang or Lung-ch'wan Kiang of the Chinese, or Shwé-li of the Burmese, which flows a little east of Momien (called by the Chinese Teng-yueh-chau), and which eventually joins the Irawadi 80 or 90 miles

[7] The only possible doubt is that of the identity of the Gak-bo and the Kan-pu or Kang-pu, but I think there is no room for this. It is asserted by Bishop des Mazures, and a comparison of the course of the *Ken-pou* of D'Anville's map with the *Kakbo Dzanbotsiou* of the Chinese map given by Klaproth in his edition of the *Description du Tibet*, entirely corroborates this.

below Bhamò. The Shwé-li does, according to Captain Gill's report, appear to bring down when in flood a vast body of water,[8] but it has not been seen by any European north of where he crossed it. Dr. Anderson, however, who accompanied Major Sladen's expedition, states that he was positively informed that its sources were only 40 or 50 miles north-east of Momien.[9] Bishop T. des Mazures, in his identification of the Schété or Ku-ts' with the Shwé-li, was perhaps again unduly biassed by maps founded on Klaproth's theories, and thus we cannot feel confidence that his statement on this point was derived from native information. Chinese geographical speculators have identified more than one river of Tibet with the Shwé-li, some of them supposing it to be the same with the Gak-bo or Ken-pu.[1] I have long been inclined to conclude that the Ku-ts' Kiang of the Bishop, the Tchitom-chu of D'Anville, represents the unseen eastern source of the Irawadi, which has been the subject of so much controversy. Dr. Anderson's Shan informants gave the unvisited eastern branch of the Irawadi the name of *Kew* (Kiu) *Hom*, a name possibly identical both with the *Khiu-shi* of Klaproth and with the Ku-ts' of Bishop Thomine des Mazures. In any case, judging from D'Anville's map the best authority we as yet have, the sources of this river, and therefore under my present hypothesis the remotest sources of the Irawadi, will not lie further north than 30° at the most. If so, the extreme length of the Irawadi's course will still fall far short of that assigned to the Lu-Kiang, or Salwen, and to the Lant'sang, or Mekong, to say nothing of our 'River of Golden Sand.' And this will be consistent enough with the calculations regarding the discharge of the

[8] See the present work, vol. ii. p. 357.
[9] *Report on Expedition to Western Yunan*, Calcutta, 1871, p. 188.
[1] See Ritter, iv. 225.

Irawadi, which will be found in the places quoted at p. [25] above.

§ 12. (vi.) The Lung-ch'uan Kiang, Lung-Ch'iang of Captain Gill, and Shwé-li of the Burmese. Of this we have spoken under No. v.

The next of the parallel rivers (vii.) is the Lu-Kiang or Nu-Kiang of Chinese maps, the Lu-ts' Kiang of Bishop des Mazures, the Salwen of Burma, under which name it enters the Gulf of Martaban. Rennell thought that the Nou-Kian (or Lu-Kiang) of the Jesuit maps must be the Upper Irawadi. And since then doubts have been thrown on the identity of the Salwen and the Lu-Kiang of Tibetan geography, by myself many years ago, and more recently by Dr. Anderson; but I am satisfied that the evidence had not been duly considered. The chief ground for discrediting its length of course and its Tibetan origin was its comparatively small body of water as reported. This may, however, be due mainly to a restricted basin,—and as far as we know the river from Yunnan downwards, the basin is very restricted;—but also we see not only how various the relations between the length and the discharge of considerable rivers may be, but how deceptive, as in the case of the Subanshiri, comparative impressions of discharge are apt to be, in the absence of measurements. The French missionaries who were for some years stationed near the Lu-Kiang, about lat. 28° 20′, speak of it as a great river. Abbé Durand, June 1863, describing a society of heretical lamas who had invited his instructions, and who were willing to consign the paraphernalia of their worship to the waters, writes, 'What will become of it all? The *Great River*, whose waves roll to Martaban, is not more than 200 or 300 paces distant.'[2] . . . A river so

[2] *Ann. de la Prop. de la Foi*, Tom. xxxvii.

spoken of in lat. 28° 20′, or thereabouts, may easily have come from a remote Tibetan source. It is hard to say more as yet, among the uncertainties of the geography of Tibetan steppes, and the difficulty of discerning between the tributaries of this river and that of the next; but the Lu-Kiang, or a main branch of it, under the name of Suk-chu, appears to be crossed by a bridge on the high road between Ssŭ-ch'uân and Lhassa,[3] four stations west of Tsiamdo on the Lant'sang. We may hope for more light if Colonel Prejevalsky's present journey is attended with the success that it deserves.

13. (viii.) The Lan-t'sang, or Mekong, the great river of Camboja, which rivals the Yangtzŭ itself in length, has its sources far north in Tibet, but attended with the uncertainties that we have spoken of under No. vii. Its lower course has long been known in a general way, but only accurately since the French expedition, from its mouth up into Yun-nan, in 1866-67. The town of Tsiamdo, capital of the province of Kham, which stands between the two main branches that form the Mekong, in about lat. 30° 45′, was visited by Huc and Gabet, on their return under arrest from Lhassa; but whatever quasi-geographical particulars Huc gives seem to have been taken, after the manner of travellers of his sort, from the Chinese itineraries published in Klaproth's 'Description du Tübet.' Kiepert, in his great map of Asia of 1864, had apparently so little faith in Huc's statements of this kind, that he makes the two branch rivers of Tsiamdo, after their union, form the source of the (Lohit) Brahmaputra. This was a somewhat wild idea even then; but now, when Tsiamdo has been visited by later missionaries (as by Bishop des

[3] See *Description du Tübet*, translated by Klaproth, p. 222, and compare Ritter iv. 252, and 225–6; also *Huc*, ii. 445. The bridge is his Kia-yu-Kiao, and had fallen just before his arrival.

Mazures and Abbé Desgodins in 1866[4]), travelling from and returning to the Chinese frontier, and following at no great distance the course of the Lan-t'sang, there can hardly be a reasonable doubt as to the course of this river as far north as Tsiamdo; and this is shown roughly in M. Desgodins' map.

§ 14. (ix.) The Kin-sha (or Chin-Sha), is that which gives a title to Captain Gill's book, a title justified by the fact that he followed its banks, with occasional deviations, during four-and-twenty marches on his way from Bat'ang to Ta-li-fu. This river is probably the greatest in Asia, as it is certainly the longest,[5] and one of the most famous; but it would be excelled even in length were the Klaprothian view of the identity of the Tsanpu and the Irawadi correct; and far excelled by the Hoang-Ho if we could view that river with the eyes of a puzzle-headed ecclesiastical traveller of the middle ages, who traversed all Asia, from Astrakhan to Peking, and who seems to have regarded as one river, which was constantly 'turning up' on his route (and *that* identical with the Phison of Paradise), the Volga, the Oxus, the Hoang-Ho and the Yangtzŭ. Well might he say with pride: 'I believe it to be the biggest river of fresh water in the world, and I have crossed it myself!'[6]

The sources of the Kin-sha are really, according to the best of our knowledge, in or about long. 90°, —*i.e.* almost as far west as Calcutta. Its upper course, though far below the source, was crossed by Huc and Gabet in the winter of 1845; and reached, though not crossed, by Colonel Prejevalsky in

[4] Desgodins, *La Mission du Thibet*, pp. 80–83. The missionaries call the place *Tcha-mou-to*.

[5] In length the order of the rivers of the world seems to be: (1) Mississippi (including Missouri), (2) Nile, (3) Amazon, (4) Yangtsze Kiang (or Kin-Sha-K.), (5) Yenesei. But probably the Congo ought, as now known, to take a high place in this list.

[6] John Marignolli, in *Cathay*, &c. p. 350.

January 1873, about long. 90° 40′, lat. 35° 50′. Huc crossed the river on the ice, and says nothing of dimensions, though he leaves on our memories that famous picture of the frozen herd of yaks. But from Prejevalsky we have information as to the great size of the river even in this remote portion of its course: the channel, when seen, 750 feet wide, and flowing with a rapid current, but the whole river-bed from bank to bank upwards of a mile wide, and, in the summer floods, entirely covered to the banks, and sometimes beyond.[7] It must have been in this flooded state that it was crossed by a Dutch traveller, Samuel Van de Putte (who has left singularly little trace of his extraordinary journeys), sometime about the year 1730.[8]

The name given to the river in this part of its course is (Mong.) *Murui-ussu*, or *Murus-ussu*, the 'Winding Water,' and (Tib.) *Di-chu*, or *Bhri chu*, the 'River of the (tame) Yak-Cow,'[9] from one or other of which Marco Polo seems to have taken the name Brius which he gives to the river in Yun-nan.

In leaving the steppes, and approaching the jurisdiction of the Chinese, it seems to receive from them the name of Kin-sha Kiang, and this name is applied, at least as far as Swi-fu, where it is joined by the Min River coming down from Ssŭ-ch'uan. Here the Great River becomes navigable to the sea, though the navigation is impeded, as Captain Gill's narrative forcibly

[7] *Prejevalsky*, ii. 221.

[8] 'After traversing this country one reaches a very large river called Bi-chu, which, as Signor Samuel Van der, a native of Fleshinghe, in the province of Zeland, in Holland, has written of it, is so large that to cross it in boats of skins he embarked in the morning, and landed on an island in the evening, and could not complete the passage across till the middle of the following day.'—*P. Horace della Penna*, in Appendix to Markham's *Tibet*, p. 312.

[9] These are Klaproth's interpretations, in his notes to *Horace della Penna*. See also Prejevalsky, u.s.

depicts, by numerous rapids and gorges hard to pass.[1]

Of all the Tibetan and Yun-nan part of the river, excepting in D'Anville's maps, of which the value in this part has always been a little doubtful, we have had, previous to Captain Gill's journey, nothing of actual survey.

§ 15. The next great river (x.) belonging to this series is the Ya-lung Kiang of the Chinese, a corruption of the Tibetan Jar-lung, or Yar-lung.[2] It rises in the mountains called Baian-Kara, on the south of the Koko-nur basin, about lat. 34°, and flows with a course generally southerly, and parallel to the Kin-sha, till it joins that river in the middle of its great southerly elbow, about lat. 26° 30′. In its upper course it is called, according to Klaproth's authority, Guia-mtso, which seems to be the same as the Nia-chu of Captain Gill (II. 135). The Jar-lung valley was the traditional cradle of the Tibetan monarchy,[3] which only at a later time moved into the western highlands of Lhassa. The river was passed some 260 miles north of the mouth, by Captain Gill on his way from Ta-chien-lu to Lit'ang, by a coracle ferry (II. 139); near this the width varied from 50 to 120 yards, with a rapid broken current. Baggage animals had to be swum across.

[1] Geographical names are largely names given, or at least defined in their application, by geographers, and one should always speak cautiously as to how a river or mountain-chain in Asia is called by natives on the spot. Blakiston, at the furthest point of the river ascended by him, found it only known as the 'River of Yun-nan.' So streams are, or used to be, locally known in Scotland only as '*the* watter,' or perhaps the 'watter of —' such a place. In one part, Capt. Gill tells, the great river is known as 'the River of Dregs and Lees.'

[2] Ritter gives the meaning of this as 'White River' (iv. 190); Klaproth as 'Vaste Rivière' (*Description du Tibet*, 190). I can find neither in the *Tibetan Dictionary* of Jaeschke. The Tibetan vocabulary in Klaproth gives *ghiar* 'ample, vaste' (p. 145). *Kar-po* is white; and it will be seen that in its lower course the Chinese do call it Pe-shui, or 'White Water.'

[3] See Sanang Setzen in Schmidt's *Ost-Mongolen*, p. 23 and *passim*.

The confluence of the two great rivers Yar-lung and Kin-sha was visited by Lieut. Garnier and his party in 1868. Garnier thus describes the junction:

'The Kin-sha is here by no means shut in as it is at Mong-kou' (where they had crossed the eastern limb of the great bend); 'and it is reached by a hardly sensible declivity. Little naked hills line the banks. The river comes from the south-west, then describes a curve inclining to 10° south of east; and it is at the apex of this curve that it receives the Ya-long Kiang. The latter arrives from the north, shut in closely by two walls of rock absolutely perpendicular, so that no passage along the banks is possible. Its breadth is nearly equal to that of the Blue River;[4] and its current, at least when we saw it, was somewhat stronger. I could not measure the depth of either, but it seemed considerable. As at Mong-kou the flood-rise was 10 mètres. I was surprised to learn that the country people here gave the name of Kin-sha Kiang to the Ya-long—i.e. to the tributary—and that of Pe-shui Kiang, 'White-Water River,' to the principal stream. If, as regards volume, there was, at first sight, some room for doubt between the two, the aspect of the two valleys showed at once which was entitled to keep the name of Kin-sha Kiang. The mouth of the Ya-long is a sort of accidental gap in the chain of hills that lines the Blue River, and the orographic configuration of the country indicates clearly that the latter river comes from the west and not from the north. . . . This anomaly in their nomenclature will seem less surprising if we remember that in China river-names are always local, and change every 60 miles. About Li-kiang you again find that the Kin-sha has got its proper name, and it is the Ya-long that is there called Pe-shui Kiang.'[5]

§ 16. The last of these great parallel rivers with which we have to deal is that great branch (xi.), called on our maps Wen and Min Kiang, which we regard geographically as a tributary of the Kin-sha or Yangtzŭ, but which the Chinese hydrographers have been accustomed to regard rather as the principal stream. We find this view distinctly indicated in that oldest of Chinese documents, the Yü-Kung.[6] It comes out again prominently in Marco Polo's account of

[4] So the French term the Yang-tzŭ.

[5] *Voyage d'Exploration*, i. 503. Garnier gives a view of the confluence.

[6] See Richthofen's *China*, i. 325: 'On the Min-shan begins the course of the Kiang. Branching eastward it forms the To . . . . &c.' The Min-shan is the mountain country north-west of Ssŭ-ch'uan.

Sin-da-fu (or Ch'êng-tu-Fu), which is quoted by Captain Gill at the beginning of his second volume. . . . 'The name of the river is *Kian-Suy*,' i.e. as the late M. Pauthier explains *Kiang-Shui*, 'Waters of the Kiang' (or River Kiang, see *He-Shui*, a little below). The same view appears in Padre Martini's 'Atlas Sinensis' (1655);[7] and very distinctly in a paper professedly (and probably in reality) indited in 1721 by the great Emperor K'ang-hi, which Klaproth has translated in that dissertation of his already spoken of regarding the course of the river of Tibet:

'From my youth up,' says the Emperor, 'I have been greatly interested in geography; and for such purposes I sent officers to the Kuen-Luen mountains, and into Si-fan. All the great rivers, such as the Great Kiang, the Hwang-Ho (Yellow River), the He-Shui (Black River, the Kara-Ussu of the Mongols), the Kin-sha Kiang, and the Lan-t'sang Kiang, have their sources in those regions. My emissaries examined everything with their own eyes; they made accurate inquiries, and have embodied their observations in a map. From this it is clear that all the great rivers of China issue from south-eastern slopes of the great chain of *Nom-Khún-ubashi*, which separates the interior from the exterior system of waters. The Hwang-Ho has its source beyond the frontier of Sining, on the east of the Kulkun mountains. . . . The Min-Kiang has its origin to the west of the Hwang-Ho, on the mountains of *Baian-Kara-tsit-sir-khana*, which is called in Tibetan *Miniak-thsuo*, and in the Chinese books *Min Shan*; it is outside of the western frontier of China; the waters of the Kiang issue from it. . . . According to the Yu-Kung the Kiang comes from the Min-Shan. This is not correct; it only passes through that range; this is ascertained. This river runs to Kuon-hien,[8] and there divides into half a score of branches, which reunite again on reaching Sin-tsin-hien; thence it flows south-east to Siu-chau-fu, where it joins the Kin-sha Kiang.'[9]

Captain Gill, so far as we are aware, is the only traveller who has traced this river above Ch'êng-tu, to the alpine highlands, doubtless the Min-Shan of the Yü-Kung, from which it emerges. This he did

[7] To this remarkable work I have tried to do some justice in an article in the *Geographical Magazine* for 1874, pp. 147–8.

[8] The Kwan-hsien of Capt. Gill, vol. i. p. 330.

[9] Klaproth, *Mémoires relatifs à l'Asie*, iii. 392.

on that excursion from Ch'êng-tu to the north, in the months of May and June, 1877, which is described in the last two chapters of the first volume, entitled, 'A Loop-cast towards the Northern Alps.'

§ 17. Captain Gill has pointed out that, of the many branches of the river which ramify through the plain of Ch'êng-tu, no one now passes through the city at all corresponding in magnitude to that which Marco Polo describes, about 1283, as running through the midst of Sin-da-fu, 'a good half-mile wide, and very deep withal.' The largest branch adjoining the city now runs on the south side, but does not exceed a hundred yards in width; and though it is crossed by a covered bridge with huxters' booths, more or less in the style described by Polo, it necessarily falls far short of his great bridge of half a mile in length. Captain Gill suggests that a change may have taken place in the last five (this should be *six*) centuries, owing to the deepening of the river-bed at its exit from the plain, and consequent draining of the latter. But I should think it more probable that the ramification of channels round Ch'eng-tu, which is so conspicuous even on a small general map of China, like that which accompanies this work, is in great part due to art; that the mass of the river has been drawn off to irrigate the plain; and that thus the wide river, which in the thirteenth century may have passed through the city, no unworthy representative of the mighty Kiang, has long since ceased, on that scale, to flow. And I have pointed out briefly (II. 6) that the fact, which Baron Richthofen attests, of an actual bifurcation of waters on a large scale taking place in the plain of Ch'êng-tu—one arm 'branching east to form the To'—(as in the terse indication of the Yü-Kung)—viz. the To-Kiang or Chung-Kiang flowing south-east to join the great river at Lu-chau, whilst another flows south to Sü-chau or

Swi-fu, does render change in the distribution of the waters about the city highly credible.[1]

The various branches, except those that diverge, as just said, to the Ch'ung-Kiang, reunite above Hsin-chin-hsien (Sin-tsin-hien of Richthofen, Sing-chin of the general map), which was Captain Gill's second station in leaving Ch'êng-tu for Tibet. Up to this point the main stream of the Min is navigable, whilst boats also ascend the easternmost branch to the capital. Indeed, vessels with 100 tons of freight reach Ch'êng-tu by this channel when the river is high.[2] At Kia-ting-fu the Min receives a large river from the mountains on the west, the Tung-Ho, which brings with it both the waters of the Ya-Ho, from Ya-chau (see Vol. II. p. 47), and those of the river of Ta-chien-lu. Kia-ting is an important trading place, the centre of the produce in silk and white-wax, and situated in a lovely and fertile country. Below this the Min-Kiang is a fine, broad, and deep stream, with a swift but regular current,[3] and obstructed by only one rapid, at Kien-wei, but that a dangerous one. It joins the Kin-sha, as so often mentioned, at Sü-chau or Swi-fu.

§ 18. We have spoken, perhaps at too great length, of the great parallel rivers which form the most striking physical characteristic of the region between India and China. Let us now say something of the history of a problem that many attempts have been made to solve: that of opening direct communication between these two great countries.

How difficult a problem this is will be, perhaps,

[1] A short but interesting notice of the irrigation and drainage of the plain of Ch'êng-tu is given by Richthofen in his 7th letter to the Shanghai Chambers, p. 64. He mentions that the existing channels, though not those close to the city, reach in some instances to a width of 1,000 feet.

[2] Richthofen, p. 71.

[3] Cooper says, 'often a mile wide;' but the river was unusually high, for he says, 'unbroken by a single rapid.' Richthofen specifies the frequent wrecks in the rapid at Kien-wei.

most forcibly expressed by the circumstance that in all the multiple history of Asiatic conquest,—and in spite of the fact that you can hardly lay your finger on an ordinary atlas-map of Asia without covering a spot that has at one time or other been the focus of a power whose conquests have spread far and wide,—at no time did a conqueror from India ever pass to China, nor (unless with one obscure and transient exception, which will be noticed below) a conqueror from China to India, nor at any time, omitting the brief passage of Chinghiz, who barely touched the Punjab, did the conquests of any conqueror embrace any part of both countries.

Moreover, Chinese history seems to establish the fact that India first became known to China, not across these lofty highlands and the vast fissures in which the rivers flow of which we have spoken, but by the huge circuit of Bactria and Kabul. The idea that there was a more ancient intercourse between the two great countries, and that the Chinas of the Laws of Menu and of the Mahabharat were Chinese, must, I now believe, be abandoned. The *Chinas*, as Vivien de St. Martin and Sir H. Rawlinson have indicated, are to be regarded as a hill-race of the Himalya, probably identical with the *Shinas* of Dardistan. The first report of India was brought to China in the year B.C. 127, in the reign of Hsia-wu-ti of the Han dynasty, when Chang-kien, a military leader who had been exploring the country about the Oxus, returned after an absence of twelve years, and, among many other notices of Western Asia, reported of a land called *Shin-tu—i.e.* Sindu, Hindu, India—of which he had heard in Tahia, or Bactria, a land lying to the south-east, moist and flat and very hot, the people civilised, and accustomed to train elephants. From its position, and from the fact that stuffs of *Shu* (*i.e.* Ssŭ-ch'uan, see Vol. II. pp

17, 35) arrived in the bazaars of Bactria through Shin-tu, Chang-kien deduced that this country must lie not far from the western provinces of China. Several efforts were in consequence made to penetrate by the Ssŭ-ch'uan frontier to India; one got as far as Tien-Yuĕ (Burma or Pegu), but others not even so far. When communication opened with India some 200 years later it was by the circuitous route of Bactria, and so it continued for centuries.

§ 19. If the acute general of the Han was right about the stuffs of Shu, the trade that brought these stuffs must have been of that obscure hand-to-hand kind, probably through Tibet, analogous in character to the trade which in prehistoric Europe brought amber, tin, or jade from vast distances. But it is curious to set alongside of these Chinese notices of obscure trade reaching to India that remarkable passage in the Periplus, a work of the first century A.D., which speaks of *Thin*, and of its great city *Thinæ*, 'from which raw silk, and silk thread, and silk stuffs were brought overland through Bactria to Barygaza (Bhrôch), 'as they were on the *other hand by the Ganges River to Limyrike*' (*Dimyrike*, the Tamul country, Malabar). Ptolemy, too, a century later, says that there was not only a road from the countries of the Seres and of the Sinae to Bactriana by the Stone-Tower (*i.e.* by Kashgar and Pamir), but also a road to India which came through Palimbothra (or Patna). It is probable that this traffic was still only of that second and third hand kind of which we have spoken, and the mention of Palibothra recalls the fact that Patna is the Indian terminus at which the Fathers Grueber and D'Orville arrived after their unique journey from Northern China by Tibet.

Returning to the Periplus, the passage that we have referred to is followed by another speaking of a

rude mongoloïd people (it is the shortest abridgment of the description) who frequented the frontier of *Thin*, bringing *malabathrum* or cassia leaves. These, I think, may undoubtedly be regarded as some one or other of the hill tribes on the Assam frontier, and I should in this case regard the mention of *Thin* as vaguely indicating the knowledge, as already popular in India, that there was a great land bearing a name like that beyond the vast barrier of mountains. In a like way we find the name of Maháchín applied in the 15th century by Nicolo Conti, and in the 16th century by Abu'l-Fazl, to the countries on the Irawadi; and I remember, many years ago, seeing a Tibetan pilgrim at Hardwár, whose only intelligible indication of where he came from was 'Maháchín.'

§ 20. As our subject is the history not of communication generally between China and India, but only of that communication across their common highland barrier, we are bound, so far as our knowledge goes, to stride at once from pseudo-Arrian to Marco Polo. There is in the interval, indeed, an obscure record of a Chinese invasion of India, which should perhaps constitute an exception.

In 641, the King of Magadha (Behar, &c.) sent an ambassador with a letter to the Chinese court. The Emperor, who was then Tai-tsung of the T'ang dynasty, probably the greatest monarch in Chinese history, in return sent one of his officers to go to the King with an imperial patent, and to invite his submission. The King *Shiloyto* (Siladitya)[4] was all astonishment. 'Since time immemorial,' he asked his courtiers, 'did ever an ambassador come from Mahachina?' 'Never,' they replied. The Chinese author

[4] This Siladitya is a king of whom much mention is made in the Memoirs of Hwen-T'sang. He was a devout Buddhist, and a great conqueror, having his capital at Kanauj, and a dominion extending over the whole of the present Bengal Presidency, from the sea to the frontier of Kashmir.

remarks here, that in the tongue of the barbarians, the Middle Kingdom is called 'Mohochintan' (*Mahá-chínasthánd*). A further exchange of civilities continued for some years. But the usurping successor of Siladitya did not maintain these amicable relations, and war ensued, in the course of which the Chinese, assisted by the kings of Tibet and Nepal, invaded India. Other Indian kings lent aid and sent supplies; and after the capture of the usurper *Alamashun* (?), and the defeat of the army commanded by his queen on the banks of the *Khien-to-wei*, 580 cities surrendered to the arms of China, and the king himself was carried prisoner to that country.

Chinese annals colour things, but they are not given to invention, and one can hardly reject this story.[5] It is probable, however, even from the story as it is told, that this was rather a Nepalese and Tibetan invasion, promoted and perhaps led by Chinese, than a Chinese invasion of India. Lassen, as far as I can discover, does not deal with the subject at all. The name of the river on which the Indian defeat took place, *Khien-to-wei*, would according to the usual system of metamorphosis represent *Gandhava*; *qu.* the Gandhak?

§ 21. The story told by Firishta and others, of an invasion of Bengal by the Mongols, 'by way of Cathay and Tibet,' during the reign of 'Alá-ud-dín Musa'úd, King of Delhi (A.D. 1244), has been shown

[5] The account is found in Stanis. Julien's papers from Mat-wan-lin, in the *Jour. Asiat.* ser. iv. tom. X. See also *Cathay, and the Way Thither*, p. lxviii., and Richthofen's *China*, pp. 523, 536–7. It is stated that Wang-hwen-tse, the envoy who went on the mission that resulted in this war, wrote a history of all the transactions in twelve books, but it is unfortunately lost. The Life of Hwen Tsang states that that worthy, when in India, prophesied that, after the death of Siladitya, India would be a prey to dreadful calamities, and that perverse men would stir up a desperate war. The same work mentions as the fulfilment that Siladitya died towards the end of the period *Yung-hwei* (A.D. 650–655), and that in conformity with the prediction, India 'became a prey to the horrors of famine,' of which the envoy Wang-hwen-tse, just mentioned, was an eye-witness. But no mention is made of the Chinese invasion.

by Mr. Edward Thomas to have arisen out of a clerical error in MSS. of the contemporary history called *Tabakát-i-Násirí*.[6] But two preposterous attempts were made in the 13th and 14th centuries, at the counter-project, the invasion of the countries above the Himalya from Gangetic India.

The first of these (A.D. 1304), was the adventure of Mahommed Bakhtiyár Khilji, the first Mussulman conqueror of Bengal, and ruler of Gaur, of whom the historian just quoted says, that 'the ambition of seizing the country of Turkestan and Tibet began to torment his brain.' The route taken is very obscure; the older interpretations carried it up into Assam, but Major Raverty's conclusion that it ascended the Tísta valley is perhaps preferable. The Khilji leader is stated to have reached the open country of Tibet, a tract entirely under cultivation, and garnished with tribes of people and populous villages. The strenuous resistance met with, the loss in battle with the natives, and the distress of the troops from such a march, compelled a retreat; they were sorely harassed by the men of the Raja of Kamrud (apparently *Kámrúp*, of which Assam was the heart), and Mahommed Bakhtiyár finally escaped with but a hundred horsemen or thereabouts, and soon after fell ill and died.

The second attempt was one of the insane projects of Mahommed Tughlak, which took place in 1337. It was, according to Firishta, directed against China, but it must be said that there is no mention of China as the object in the earlier accounts. The account given by the historian Ziá-ud-din Barní, who wrote in the next generation, is as follows :—

'The sixth project, which inflicted a heavy loss upon the army, was the design which he formed of capturing the mountain of Karà-jal. His conception was that, as he had undertaken the conquest of Khurásán, he would (first) bring under the dominion of

[6] See Thomas's *Pathán Kings of Dehli*, p. 121.

Islam this mountain, which lies between the territories of Hind and those of China, so that the passage for horses and soldiers, and the march of the army, might be rendered easy. To effect this, a large force, under distinguished *amírs* and generals, was sent to the mountains of Karájal, with orders to subdue the whole mountain. In obedience to orders it marched into the mountains, and encamped in various places; but the Hindus closed the passes, and cut off its retreat. The whole force was thus destroyed at one stroke, and out of all this chosen body of men only ten horsemen returned to Dehli to spread the news of its discomfiture.'[7]

The account given by the traveller Ibn Batuta, who was then at the court of Mahommed Tughlak, is to the same effect; and though he mentions the names of two places that were taken by the troops, *Jidiya* before entering the mountains, and *Warangal* in the hill-country, Ibn Batuta does not aid us by these (the last of which is altogether anomalous) in fixing the locality, any more than he helps us to understand the object, of the enterprise.

§ 22. Coming now to Marco Polo, whose steps it would be hard for any traveller in a little known region of Asia altogether to avoid, we may briefly say that on the first important mission to which he was designated by the Great Khan Kublai, in making his way to the frontier of Burma (*Mien*), he travelled from Ch'êng-tu (*Sin-da-fu*), by the route which Captain Gill followed, as far probably as Ch'ing-chi-hsien. This was Captain Gill's ninth march from Ch'êng-tu. We do not know the length of Marco's daily journeys, but after five such from Ch'êng-tu, he was already in Tibet. Probably the country which was counted as Tibet, in those days, began immediately on passing Ya-chau and entering the mountains. From Ching-chi-hsien the routes diverge. Captain Gill, bound for Ta-chien-lu and Bat'ang, strikes north-west; Marco Polo's route continued to bear south-south-east, towards the city of Ning-yuan-fu, the exist-

[7] Elliot's *History of India*, &c. (by Dowson) iii. 241-2.

ing capital of the beautiful valley of Kien-chang, the Caindu or Ghiendu of the Venetian. This is the route on which Baron Richthofen's journey met with an unfortunate interruption (see p. [64]), and which has recently been travelled by Mr. Baber. It is the road by which the greater part of the goods for Bhamò and Ava used to travel from Ch'êng-tu, before the Mahommedan troubles in Western Yun-nan. Those goods went on by a direct road from Kien-chang to Ta-li-fu. But Marco Polo's road led him south, and across the great elbow of the Kin-sha to the city of Yun-nan Fu (his *Yachi*). From this he travelled to Ta-li-fu (*Carajan*), and thence to Yung-chang-fu (*Vochan* or *Unchan*). Beyond this there are difficulties as to the exact extent and direction of his travels, concerning which some discussion occurs in Vol. II. Chap. VIII. of Captain Gill's book, as well as in my own commentary on the book of Marco. It would hardly profit to enter here on a detailed recapitulation of a discussion which as yet has confessedly received no satisfactory determination.

§ 23. Ta-li-fu, which is so often spoken of in these pages, and is so prominent a point in Captain Gill's narrative, is indeed a focal point on this frontier at which many routes converge; and for ages it has been the base of all operations, military or commercial, from the side of China towards Burma. It may still be regarded as the capital of Western Yun-nan, as it was in the days of Marco Polo. Ta-li-fu, for some centuries before the master whom Marco served, Kublai Khan, conquered it (A.D. 1253), had been the seat of a considerable Shān Kingdom, called by the Chinese Nan (or Southern)-Chao: this latter term being a Shan word for 'prince,' which still figures among the titles of the kings of Siam, and of all the other states of that wide-spread race. During the recent brief independence of the Mahommedans or *Panthés* (pro-

bably themselves as much Shan as Chinese in blood), Ta-li again became a seat of royalty, and here reigned Tu-wen-hsiu, alias Sultan Sulimán, from about 1860 to 1873, when the city was captured by the Imperialists, and the Mahommedans were massacred. The king himself took poison, but his head was sent in honey to Peking.[8]

Mr. Baber, quoted at p. 303 of Vol. II., says that the terms *Sultan* and *Sulimán* were quite unknown on the spot. The fact is that in Indo-Chinese countries Islam has never assimilated the nationality of those who profess it, as in Western Asia. This is the case in some degree in Java, as it is in greater degree in Burma, and no doubt more than all in China. The people, in these countries, professing Islam, are to be compared with Abyssinian professors of Christianity. At the court of the Mussulman Sultan of Djokjokarta, in Java, I have had the honour of being introduced to half a dozen comely sultanas, and of shaking hands with them; whilst I have seen the Sultan and his Court taking part in a banquet at the Dutch Residency, and in drinking a number of toasts, of which a printed programme in Dutch and Javanese was distributed. In the capital of Burma, where professing Mahommedans are much less secluded from the influence of more orthodox Moslems than those of Yun-nan are, they have been characterised in passages of which I extract the following: 'As might be expected, they are very ignorant sons of the Faith, and in the indiscriminating character of their diet, are said to be no better than their neighbours; so that our strict Mussulmans from India were not willing to partake of their hospitalities.' And as regards names: 'Every indigenous Mussulman has two names. Like the Irishman's dog, though his true name is *Turk*,

[8] Tu-wen-hsiu, or, as Cooper calls him phonetically, Dow-win-shoow, had been a wealthy merchant in Tali.

he is always called *Toby*. As a son of Islam, he is probably Abdul Kureem; but as a native of Burma, and for all practical purposes, he is Moung-yo, or Shwé-po.'[9] The style of 'Sultan Suliman' &c. was no doubt confined to the few Hajjis or Mollahs that were at Ta-li. That there were such is proved by the Arabic circular which was issued, and which reached the Government of India in the way mentioned at page [52] below. The following is an extract from that document: 'O Followers of Mahommed! in telling you how it fared with us, we offer grateful thanks to the Almighty. It behoves you to rejoice in the grace that God hath shown to us. . . . God gave us courage and created fear in the hearts of the Idolaters, so we, by the decree of God, did defeat them. . . . Therefore we have set up a Mahommedan Sultan; he is prudent, just, and generous. . . . His name is *Sádik*, otherwise called *Sulimán*. He has now established Mahommedan law. . . . Since we have made him our Imam we have been, by the decree of God, very victorious. . . . The metropolis of infidelity has become a city of Islam.'

Bhamò, again, a small stockaded town, in lat. 24° 16′, stands on a high bank over the Irawadi, on its eastern side, about two miles below the entrance of a considerable stream, which we have been used to call, from the Burmese side, the Ta-peng River, but which Captain Gill, who followed its course almost the whole way from Têng-yuëh-chau (or Momien) to its confluence with the Irawadi, calls the Ta-ying Ho, or T'êng-yuëh River. Here, or hereabouts, has long been the terminus of the land-commerce from China; and as early as the middle of the fifteenth century we find at Venice, on the famous world-map of Frà Mauro (who no doubt got his information from Nicolo Conti, who had wandered to Burma earlier in

[9] *Mission to the Court of Ava in* 1855, pp. 151–152.

that century), on the upper part of the river of Ava, a rubric which runs: *Qui le marchatantie se translata da fiume a fiume per andar in Chataio.* 'Here goods are transferred from river to river, and so pass on to Cathay.' And in the first half of the seventeenth century there is some evidence of the maintenance here of an English factory for the East India Company.

§ 24. The right to travel in the interior of China was first conceded by Article IX. of the Treaty of Tien-tsin,[1] which conferred it on all Englishmen. And this treaty undoubtedly constitutes a land-mark from which we are to date the commencement of modern exploration, and of a more exact knowledge, only now being slowly built up, of the physical geography of the country, of its natural resources, and of the true characteristics of the cities and populations of China. But here it is necessary to interpose a caveat. When we speak of the commencement of modern exploration in China and Tibet, or allude to any modern traveller as being the first to visit this or that secluded locality in those regions, it must always be understood that we begin by assuming a large exception in favour of the missionaries of the Roman Church: for those regions have to a great extent, and for many years past, been habitually traversed by the devoted labourers who have been extending the cords of their Church in the interior, and on the inland frontier of China. Geographical research is not their object, and for a long period publicity was only adverse to their

[1] 'Art. IX.—British subjects are hereby authorised to travel, for their pleasure or for purposes of trade, to all parts of the interior, under passports which will be issued by their Consuls, and countersigned by the local authorities. These passports, if demanded, must be produced for examination in the localities passed through. . . . . If he (the traveller) be without a passport, or if he commit an offence against the law, he shall be handed over to the nearest Consul for punishment, but he must not be subjected to any ill usage in excess of personal restraint. . . .'

purpose; and thus their labours and their journeys in those remote regions, which long preceded the treaty of Tien-tsin, though often recorded in the *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi* and similar journals for those who seek them there, have only occasionally come before the notice of geographical societies, or of the public in Europe. There are, indeed, notable exceptions, of which we shall presently take account; but apart from these, in hardly any instance has a traveller penetrated in this region to a point where he has not found a member of these Roman Catholic missions to have been before him.

§ 25. We have already alluded to the letter written from Tibetan territory by an eminent member of these missions, which reached the Asiatic Society of Bengal, to their no small surprise, in 1861. When Lieut. Garnier and his party made their rapid and venturesome visit to Ta-li-fu, in 1868, their guide and helper was their countryman M. Leguilcher, of the same mission, whom they found in his seclusion near the north end of the Lake of Ta-li-fu, and with whom Captain Gill made acquaintance nine years later at the city itself. Not only at Ch'ung-ch'ing and at Ch'êng-tu did Captain Gill find kindly aid among the members of these missions, but at Ta-chien-lu, on the acclivity of the great Tibetan plateau, like Mr. Cooper before him, he found cordial welcome from the venerable Bishop Chauveau, an old man whose noble presence and benign character seem to have equally impressed both travellers.[2]

[2] See Captain Gill, Vol. II. pp. 111–112. Mr. Cooper says: 'I perceived a venerable old man, dressed in Chinese costume, with a long snow-white beard. I shall never forget him as long as I live. He was sixty years of age, forty of which he had spent in China as a missionary. But long illness made him look older. His countenance was very beautiful in its benignity; his eye, undimmed by age and suffering, lighted on me with a kindly expression; and he bade me welcome in English, which he had learned from his mother, an English lady, with

Members of the same body were found by both travellers also at Bat'ang, in the basin of the Kin-sha, and on both occasions, at nine years' interval, the Abbé Desgodins was one of their number.

Bat'ang appears to be at present the furthest station of the missionaries towards Tibet; nor have they any now within the actual Lhassa dominions. But at one time they had for some years establishments within the political, as well as the ethnical, boundary of Tibet. Abbé Renou, the first of the body to make an advance in this direction, obtained in 1854 a perpetual lease of Bonga, a small valley in the hills adjoining the Lu-Kiang on its eastern bank, for a rent of 16 or 17 taels. This is under the Government of Kiang-ka, where officials both Chinese and Tibetan reside. The missionaries of Bonga cleared a good deal of land, erected buildings, and began to have considerable success in making converts, both among the wilder tribes of the hills, and among the Tibetan villages around them. But in 1858 they were violently ejected by the person who had given the lease, aided by an armed party. No redress was got till 1862, when the Treaty of Tien-tsin began to take actual effect; the suit of the missionaries was heard in the Court at Kiang-ka, and they were reinstated at Bonga. Three years later, however, the neighbouring Lamas, who, as Captain Gill several times explains, are very unpopular themselves, and who were all the more disposed to view with jealousy whatever success the missionaries had among the people, took advantage of disorders in the Province, and expelled the missionaries from Bonga and other settlements outside the Chinese political frontier.

a tremulous but musical voice.' (Page 181.) And again: 'The kindness of the people of Ta-tsian-loo had made a deep impression on me, and in taking leave of the kind old Bishop, who, with tears in his eyes, invoked a blessing upon me, my emotion checked all utterance.' (Page 222.)

MM. Desgodins and F. Biet, who were at Bonga, after a good deal of violence on one side, and some administration of presents on the other, were allowed to carry off their flock into Chinese territory, but their establishment was sacked and burnt (29th September, 1865). MM. Durand and A. Biet, who directed an out-station at a place called Kie-na-tong (among the Lu-tse), on the Salwen, just within the Yun-nan boundary, were driven away, and the former was shot in crossing a swing bridge.

Monseigneur Chauveau, who had at this time succeeded to the government of the mission, established his head-quarters at Ta-chien-lu, on the borders of what we should in India call the Regulation and the Non-Regulation Provinces, and outstations were still maintained at Tseku and Yerkalo on the Lan-t'sang; the former under Yun-nan, the latter in the Bat'ang territory, but none in Tibet proper.

§ 26. In January 1867, the Kájí Jagat Sher, an envoy from Maharaja Jung Bahadur to the Court of China,[3] was passing through Bat'ang, and made the acquaintance of the missionaries there. Their communications were in English, which was probably indifferent on both sides; but what the Nepalese envoy said led the French fathers to suppose that the British Government in India had heard of their sufferings at the hands of the Tibetans, and had requested the Nepal Government to make inquiry.[4] M. Desgodins accordingly sent by the hands of Jagat Sher a very interesting letter, written in very imperfect English, and addressed to the Resident at Katmandu (then Colonel George Ram-

[3] Cooper met Jagat Sher both at Ch'êng-tu, and near Bat'ang in returning. The Envoy had met with very bad treatment from the Chinese, and was not allowed to proceed beyond Ch'êng-tu. (See *Cooper*, pp. 158 *seq.*, 398 *seq.*

[4] It does not seem to have been the fact that any news of the kind had reached India.

say), with a full account of their circumstances, of the violent treatment they had met with, and of the murder of M. Durand. The Governor-General, in replying to Colonel Ramsay's communication of this letter, expressed the deep interest with which he had read it, but intimated that the only intervention in their favour possible, would be through the Maharaja of Nepal, and through our Minister at Peking. The Government letter went on :

'You will, at the same time, however, observe that if the Government may be permitted to offer an opinion to men animated by higher considerations than those of mere personal security or success, these reverend gentlemen would do well to abandon the country in which their sufferings have been so great, and settle in British India, where there are extensive and peaceful tracts, such as Lahoul, Spiti, and Kulu, containing a semi-Thibetan population, likely to receive Christianity with favour.'

Copies of the correspondence were sent to our Minister at Peking, and of the letter intended for the missionaries, not only thither, and to Nepal, but to Ladák and Upper Assam. This shows how difficult any communication is across the iron wall that separates British India from the Chinese frontier;[5] and it is greatly to be questioned if any one of the four copies ever reached its destination. That sent by Nepal was suppressed by the Chinese Amban at Lhassa ; the messenger *viâ* Assam failed in making his way, and after going fifteen days' journey from Sadiya, returned ; the copy from Ladák was forwarded by Dr. Cayley through the inauspicious medium of a monsignore of the Tibetan Curia, who

[5] There are but three cases in our time that I can recall in which the iron wall was pierced by a piece of intelligence. The first was the murder of MM. Krick and Boury, of which we have spoken above. The second was this communication from the priests at Bat'ang to the Resident at Katmandu. The third was the Arabic proclamation or circular, issued in the name of the Panthé rulers at Ta-li-fu, for the information of the Muhommedan world, which also reached Col. Ramsay at Katmandu. A copy of it was given me by the lamented Mr. J. W. Wyllie, and it was printed by my late friend Lieut. Fr. Garnier (to whom I gave it) in the appendix to his *Voyage d'Exploration*, vol. i., p. 564.

was returning to Lhassa. Of that sent by Peking the fate has not reached us; it is doubtful, from the allusion to the subject in a collection of notices on Tibet by M. Desgodins, whether it ever was received.[6]

§ 27. This is, however, anticipating in chronological order. The first picture of Eastern Tibet in modern times was that set forth by the Abbé Huc in the famous *narrative of* his journey with Gabet, which astonished the world in 1850. It is true that occasional letters from both Huc and Gabet had appeared in various numbers of the *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi* in 1847–1850, but the circle to which that publication speaks was probably more limited and exclusive then than it is even now; and I cannot find that practically anything was known *to the public of their* remarkable journey prior to the publication of the work. Sir John Davis, indeed, has told us how he furnished Lord Palmerston, as early as 1847, with some particulars of the journey, which his secretary, Mr. Johnstone, had obtained from Gabet, who was his fellow-passenger *to* Europe, and these appear to have been printed, for there are most curiously confused allusions to them in the article 'Asia,' in the eighth edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' published in 1853.[7] And up to 1855 there is absolutely, so far as I can discover, no notice of Huc or his companion in the Journals of the Royal Geographical Society, or in the annual dis-

[6] See that work (*La Mission du Thibet de* 1855 *à* 1870, Verdun, 1872) pp. 115–116. The facts in the text are gathered from a correspondence in the India Office. I lately read a Roman Catholic paper on Lord Lawrence, which, while doing him noble justice in most respects, spoke regretfully of the narrow Ulster type of religion in which he had been educated, or words to that effect. I will only say that the Viceroy who despatched the letter quoted above, and took all this trouble for these remote French Roman Catholic priests, was Sir John Lawrence, whilst the signature of the letter is that of Sir William Muir.

[7] 'Our scanty knowledge of Tibet has lately received a valuable addition in the journal of the *Revd. Mr. Puch*, a French missionary, who

courses of its Presidents, except a singularly meagre one in Captain (afterwards Admiral) W. H. Smyth's address of 1851, a reference which is certainly a notable example of scientific puritanism, true though it be that Huc does not belong in any sense or measure to the scientific category.[8] Just as little was he entitled to be ranked, as he is by a late pretentious French writer on Chinese matters, with Pauthier (who with all his faults was a genuine and enthusiastic student), and with that modest and indefatigable scholar Mr. Alexander Wylie, lumping all three together, as this writer does, as 'excellents sinologues.'[9] That Huc was, as a sinologue, next door to an impostor, and that his brilliant and, in the main, truthful sketches of travel in Tartary and Tibet were followed by later works of a greatly degenerated character, is undeniable. But it is equally undeniable that Huc was a daring and distinguished traveller, and the author of one of the most delightful books of travel ever written.[1]

§ 28. Many years before Huc's book appeared, we had, indeed, in the immortal work of Carl Ritter,—at once a quarry and an edifice,—a full, and, as far as all

proceeded from Peking, through Mongolia and Tangut, to L'Hassa, the capital of Tibet, which he left for China by the road through Kham. An English translation of his MS. journal was recently published under the auspices of Lord Palmerston.' The final redactor of the article was evidently unable to make anything of the 'Rev. Mr. Puch,' and unwilling to disturb the references of his predecessor, so he tells us that 'the travels of Huc, Gabet, and *Puch* have made some additions to our knowledge of Tartary and Tibet.' (8th edit. vol. i. p. 754.)

[8] 'The Narrative of a Residence in the Capital of Thibet, by M. Huc, a Lazarist missionary, contains some corroborative details respecting a country imperfectly known to Europeans.'—*Jour. R. Geog. Soc.* XX., p. lxx.

[9] See the *Athenæum*, August 18, 1877, in which there is a review by the present writer, of the work referred to.

[1] I have spoken more fully regarding Huc in the Introductory Essay to my friend Mr. Delmar Morgan's translation of Col. Prejevalsky's travels, and have there defended the substantial truth of his 'Souvenirs' against the Russian traveller's charges. That Huc embellished, and especially in his dramatic reports of conversations, no one can question.

our subsequent information goes, an accurate account of the great road from Ch'êng-tu to Lhassa, by Tachien-lu, Bat'ang, Tsiamdo, &c., with the detail of its daily stages. This is taken from Klaproth's French edition of the Chinese *Description du Tibet*, as rendered into Russian by the priest Hyacinth Bichurin (Paris, 1831). Huc makes a good deal of use of this itinerary, which describes the road which he followed on his return from Lhassa, in the very scanty contributions to geography which his narrative contains; but had it been printed as an appendix to his book, we should have followed his journey with more intelligence. In judging of his work from a geographer's point of view, however, it is fair to remember that, on this half of the journey at least, he and Gabet were travelling under arrest.

At the time of Huc's return the Roman Catholic missions had apparently no outpost beyond Ch'êng-tu. It was, as we have seen, about eight years afterwards that they began to establish themselves on the Tibetan frontier and beyond it. And apart from their little known movements, it was not till 1861 that any new endeavour occurred to penetrate those regions.

§ 29. The first attempt to act in this direction upon the concessions of the treaty of Tien-tsin, was the voyage of Captain Blakiston, Lieutenant-Colonel Sarel, and Dr. Barton, accompanied by Mr. (now Bishop) Schereschewsky of an American mission, up the Yang-tzŭ. Their object was to penetrate by Tibet, and across the Himalya, into India. That was a bold aim, which even at this date, eighteen years later, has never been accomplished. But they were the first to ascend the Great River above Hankow, and penetrated to some fifty miles above the confluence of the Min River at Sü-chau (Swi-fu), reaching the town of Ping-shan. Here it was found impossible to go on, for their boatmen refused to advance any further on the river, and a

land attempt was impracticable in the then disturbed state of the country. Captain Blakiston was a diligent surveyor, and brought back a detailed chart of the river for 840 miles.[2] Blakiston and Sarel left Hankow in March 1861, and reached it again at the end of June. The work which Captain Blakiston published on the subject of this voyage[3] contains much of interest, and has excellent woodcuts from Dr. Barton's sketches. Turning to another side of the geographical territory of which we are speaking, we should mention here an attempt made by two members of the Government service in Pegu (Captain C. E. Watson, and Mr. Fedden of the Geological Survey) to penetrate northward to Thein-ni, on the direct road between the Burmese capital and Ta-li-fu.[4] They reached a point within little more than a march of Thein-ni, but the place was then in the hands of an insurgent chief, and they were obliged to turn back. The road is thus one which remains unexplored. It runs through the secluded Shan principality of Kaingma, in about latitude 23° 32′, and thence to the Chinese city of Shun-ning-fu, called by the Burmese Shwen-li, and by the Shans Muang-chan. At one part of this road, between Thein-ni and Shun-ning, it enters a tract partaking of the excessively unhealthy character ascribed by Marco Polo and by Captain Gill (II. 345–6) to the same region a little further north, and the road then crosses the Mekong by an iron suspension bridge.

§ 30. In 1868, no less than three attempts from

[2] A comparison of Blakiston's chart with the old Jesuit representation of the river as given in D'Anville's maps is very favourable to the general correctness of the latter. Captain Gill, who made the comparison at my request, says: 'Generally the agreement is very remarkable. The greatest difference in general conformation is between I-tu and the entrance to the Tung-ting Lake.'

[3] *Five Months on the Yangtsze*, &c. London, J. Murray, 1862.

[4] *Selections from the Records of the Government of India in Foreign Department*. No. xlix. 1865.

three different points were made to penetrate the obscurities of the *region* of which we are treating: one by the French expedition which started from Saigon; a second by Mr. Cooper, from Ssŭ-ch'uan; the third by an English expedition from Bhamò on the Irawadi.

The great effort of the French party under Captain Doudart de la Grée of the navy, had been the exploration of the Mekong, which they ascended and surveyed from the delta, as far as Kiang-Hung, in lat 22° 0′ (a place that had been reached by Lieutenant, now General, W. C. McLeod of the Madras army, on his solitary journey from Maulmain in 1837).[5] From this point they travelled through Southern Yun-nan, to the provincial capital, Yun-nan-fu, which they reached at the end of 1867, the first time in our knowledge that any European traveller (not being a missionary priest) had seen the Yachi of Marco Polo, since he himself was there, *circa* 1283.

In view to examining the upper waters of the Mekong, and to other objects not very clear, but of which one perhaps was merely that of penetrating to a place which had been the subject of so much speculation, and the scene of such a singular revolution, the leaders of the party were very desirous to reach Ta-li-fu, then the capital of the chosen sovereign of the Mahommedan, or quasi-Mahommedan, rebels of Yun-nan, whom we, after the Burmese, call *Panthés*. The Chinese imperialist authorities at Yun-nan-fu received with laughter and amazement the proposal of the Frenchmen that they should be allowed to pass direct from the capital to the rebel outposts; but they were bent on success, and achieved it at a later date, starting from Tong-ch'uan-fu, in the northern part of the province (lat. 26° 25½′). Captain

[5] The latitude of McLeod agrees perfectly with that of the French; there is a difference of 9′ in their longitudes.

Doudart was too ill to take part in the expedition, though his danger was not then suspected; and the conduct of this digression fell to Lieutenant Francis Garnier. Starting from Tong-ch'uan, January 30, 1868, they crossed and recrossed the River of Golden Sand on the eastern and southern limbs of the great southern curve, passing near Hwai-li, and crossing on the second occasion near the confluence of the Yar-lung with the Kin-sha. In the advance nearer Ta-li the party owed much (as has been already noticed) to the patriotic aid of M. Leguilcher. The meeting of the party with this gentleman in his remote parsonage at Tu-tui-tse, near the northern end of the Lake of Ta-li, is not unlike the famous meeting of Stanley and Livingstone:

"One of our guides pointed out to me, some hundred mètres below, a little platform, hung as it were in mid-air against the flank of the mountain; there were a few trees planted in rows, and a group of houses surmounted by a cross. I began running down the break-neck winding path, and before long I came in sight of a man with a long beard standing on the edge of the platform, who was attentively regarding me. In a few minutes more I was by his side: 'Are not you Père Leguilcher?' I said. 'Yes, sir,' he answered with a little hesitation, 'and no doubt you are come to announce Lieut. Garnier, from whom I have just had a letter?' My dress, my unkempt look, my rifle and revolver, no doubt gave me in the Father's eyes the look of a *buccaneer*; it was evidently not at all what he expected in an officer of the Navy!— 'I am the man who wrote the letter, mon père,' I said, laughing, 'and I see you take me for my own servant. . . . . .' We exchanged a cordial grasp of the hand, and I introduced the members of the expedition as they came up in succession."[6]

Accompanied by M. Leguilcher the party reached Ta-li-fu, but they had to leave it in hot haste (March 4) within thirty-six hours of their arrival. The success of their retreat was due to the tact and boldness of Garnier. They returned to Tong-ch'uan by the route they had come, and on their arrival found

[6] *Voyage d'Exploration*, p. 510.

that their gallant leader, Captain Doudart de la Grée, had died in their absence.

§ 31. Some years later, after having completed a splendid and valuable book, and after taking an active part in the defence of Paris in 1871, Garnier returned to China, bent on fresh exploration. What he accomplished before he was called away to another field, on which he fell, was chiefly in the detailed examination of the navigation of the Upper Yang-tzŭ, and of some of the scarcely known tributaries of the great river in Kwei-chau and Hu-nan.

But the object which he had made spécially his own âim was the exploration of the virgin field of Tibet. Indeed, in this direction he had, like my friend Captain Gill, aimed very high :

'I am come to China,' he wrote, 'as you conjecture, to endeavour to penetrate Tibet. My object is to reconnoitre that part of the Yárú-tsang-pu which lies between Lassa and Sadiya. If I am able—but I doubt it sorely—I should wish to return by the west, i.e., by Turkestan. I have just returned from Peking, where I have been to ask for passports, and letters of recommendation to the Chinese ambassador at Lhassa. I have seen reason to think, however, that these passports will have no great value, and that the difficulties to be encountered in penetrating Tibet will be very great. And they will be enhanced by this, that instead of aiming at Lhassa by the usual road, I wish to adopt a more southerly line (about the 29th degree of latitude) so as to cross the sources of the Cambojá and the Salwen, and to make an attempt to explore the sources of the Irawadi. The Brahmaputra-Irawadi question is, in my judgment, far from being absolutely settled; and you have yourself, in the maps attached to Marco Polo, prolonged the Irawadi hypothetically beyond the limit assigned to it in your map of 1855. . . . .'[7]

In another letter, one of the last received from him, he recurred to the subject :

'I thank you much for the paper you sent me on the hydrography of Eastern Tibet. I must have said more than I intended, if in my last letter I led you to suppose that I inclined to the identity of the Irawadi and Tsang-pu. All chances and probabilities seem to me the other way, and in favour of the Brahma-

[7] Letter, dated April 17, 1873, to the present writer.

putra, and my general map expresses this sufficiently. But we have to do with a country so singular, and so little like any other, that what would elsewhere amount to proof positive, leaves us here still in doubt. Like you I have no doubt that the continuation of the Irawadi is to be sought in some river of Tibet. The reasons which you assign for identifying this river with the Kuts' Kiang or Chété Kiang of Monsgr. des Mazures, are very forcible. Did I tell you that we were informed in Burmese Laos that the Irawadi continued northward as a great river, which the Laotians call the Nam-mao, and which they distinguish from the Nam-Búm and the Nam Kiú (Myit-ngè and Myit-gyi).[8] The Nam-mao appears to be the Kuts' Kiang. . . . . I desire to avoid forming a theory, even in my own mind, for nothing hoodwinks a traveller like the adoption of a preconceived idea, ... but I repeat as regards the Brahmaputra the probabilities require to be corroborated by material demonstration.

'The south-eastern region of Tibet, as far as we could judge on our approach to Li-kiang-fu and Tali, is a country full of surprises. The rivers vanish and appear again. A stream will bifurcate, and, by help of the caverns which abound in that limestone formation, the two branches will sometimes change from one basin into another, discharging into two different rivers. My *impression* —you will think it a strange one—is that, as regards the Brahmaputra and the Irawadi, or, in more general terms, at some point of the connection of the fluvial system of Tibet with that of India and Indo-China, there is a *perte du fleuve*—a phenomenon in fact analogous to that of the Rhone, but on a larger scale. We have seen this happen in Yun-nan with small rivers. And I am just returned from a journey to the frontiers of Szechuan and Kwei-chau, where I have been eye-witness of some ten varieties of this very phenomenon,—rivers passing over one another, splitting in two, and changing from one basin to another. Nothing could be more curious, or more difficult to determine geographically, than the hydrographic network in the basin of the U-Kiang (the river of Kwei-yang—that river which some have assigned as the line of Marco Polo's return to Szechuan). Now there is a striking analogy of geological formation and orographical character between this tract and the south-east of Tibet. It is altogether on a much smaller scale, that is all. Might not we expect to find in the course of the great rivers, of which we have been speaking, some such solution of continuity, which would explain the obscurity which actually hangs over them? This, I repeat, is no more than impression; I take good care to keep from making it into a theory. . . . Pray make me useful in every way that can help your work. I read it carefully whenever I pass over any fraction of Marco Polo's itinerary. As yet I have found nothing of interest to say, unless it be that it seems to me the most exact and faithful impression of all that can be known at this day of the acts and deeds of the traveller, and of the state of the countries which he

[8] These are the Burmese terms for 'Little River' and 'Great River.'

traversed. . . . . As soon as I shall have conferred with Admiral Dupré, and have definitively settled my plans, I will write again. I should of course be very glad of the support of the English authorities, should I succeed in emerging by Assam or Nepal.' [9]

§ 32. The second enterprise of 1868 to which we have made reference was that of Mr. Cooper. He left Hankow on January 4, 1868, Ch'êng-tu on March 7, and Ta-chien-lu on April 30, following, to Lit'ang and Bat'ang, the road over the high plateau, afterwards traversed by Captain Gill. Mr. Cooper's hopes were raised at Bat'ang by the information he received that the town or village of Roemah (on the Lohit Brahmaputra), from which Assam was not far, could be reached from that point in eighteen days. These hopes were, however, speedily extinguished by the prohibition of the Chinese authorities. Mr. Cooper then decided on travelling to Ta-li-fu and Bhamò. His route beyond Bat'ang diverged from that followed by Captain Gill. Instead of following the River of Golden Sand he chiefly followed the valley of the Lan-t'sang. He spent a night at Tse-ku, within the Yun-nan boundary, on the western bank of that river, where the French missionaries had an out-station among the aboriginal tribes, and an estate which they had purchased from one of the chiefs, occupied chiefly by converts from those tribes, Lu-tse (from whom the name Lu-ts'-Kiang, by which the river Salwen is known on this frontier, is taken), Lu-sus or Lissus, Mossos or Mus-us, and what not. This is the most westerly point that has been reached by any traveller from China in the region of the great rivers north of Bhamò. And Mr. Cooper appears to be almost justified in stating that he was here within 80 miles of Manché (on the Upper Irawadi), in the Khamti country, which was visited by Wilcox from India in 1827. The distance is,

[9] Letter dated Saigon, August 28, 1873.

however, apparently nearly 100 miles. South of this Mr. Cooper reached the Chinese town of Wei-si-fu, nearly due west of Li-Kiang-fu, and there obtained passports from the military commandant to go on to Ta-li. He advanced three days further, but a local chief of a tribe whom Mr. Cooper calls Tzefan, on the border of the Ta-li territory (then under the 'Panthé' Sultan), refused to let him proceed, and on his return to Wei-si he was imprisoned and threatened with death by the civil officer in charge, who apparently believed him to be in communication with the Ta-li rebels. After five weeks' imprisonment he was allowed to depart (August 6), and returned by the way he had come as far as Ya-chau. Thence he diverged to the south, travelling through a beautiful country of tea-gardens, and of the white-wax cultivation, to Kia-ting-fu, a famous river-port and *entrepôt* upon the Min river. This he descended to Swi-fu, where the two great contributaries of the Yang-tzŭ unite. Thence he descended the Great River to Hankow, which he reached November 11, 1868.[1]

In the following year Mr. Cooper made an attempt from the side of Assam to penetrate to Bat'ang. He started from Sadiya October, 1869, and passing up the line of the (Lohit) Brahmaputra, through the Mishmi country, reached Prun, a village about 20 miles from Roemah, the first Tibetan post, and half that distance from Samé, where MM. Krick and Boury were murdered. From this he was turned back.

§ 33. Major Sladen's expedition, sent under the authority of the Government of India, left Bhamò February 26, 1868. After long detentions on the way, by want of carriage and other obstacles, placed in the way of the party, it was supposed, by the influence of Chinese merchants afraid of injury to their commercial monopoly, they reached Momien

[1] This is called 1869 in Mr. Cooper's book, p. 450.

(Teng-yueh-chau of the Chinese), then the frontier city towards the west of the Mahommedan Government of Western Yun-nan. The Governor received and entertained the party with great courtesy and hospitality, but entirely objected to their proceeding further, on the professed ground of danger to themselves from the disturbed state of the country. They reached Momien on May 25, left it July 13, and arrived again at Bhamò on September 5, 1868.

Major Sladen gave an account of the journey before the Royal Geographical Society, June 26, 1871,[2] and Dr. Anderson, the medical attendant of the party, and a good naturalist, has recorded all the proceedings and observations of the expedition in a work which contains much of interest. But there was not much geographical information collected, and an officer who had been specially attached to the party as surveyor was allowed to quit it and return to Burma, for reasons which it is not easy to understand, when they were about half-way to Momien.[3]

Sir R. Alcock has pointed out how inevitably the friendly intercourse into which we entered, on this occasion, with the representatives of a body in revolt against China, must have created distrust in the Imperial Government and its partisans in Yun-nan, and not improbably led, more or less directly, to a tragical catastrophe, when the attempt to explore the trade routes of the Yun-nan frontier was renewed six years later. The suspicion of foreign interference had perhaps another effect, in stimulating the Chinese Government to effective measures for the extinction of the Mahommedan revolt.

[2] *Proceedings of Royal Geographical Society*, XV. pp. 363 *seq.*

[3] Dr. Anderson's account was printed by Government at Calcutta, 1871, *Report of an Expedition to Western Yunan*, large 8vo. In another work, published in London, 1876, *Mandalay to Momien*, he gives an account both of this and of Col. Browne's expedition, of which also he was a member. And his scientific collections have been separately published in 4to.

§ 34. We pass now to 1872, in the March of which year Baron Richthofen was at Ch'êng-tu, engaged on the last of those important journeys which formed the basis of his work on China. Art is long, and life is short! We see with pain months passing into years without the appearance of any second volume of that great work. The expedition which he projected and commenced from Ch'êng-tu brings him within the category of explorers in the region which is our subject, though it came to an untimely end. His project will be best explained in his own words:

'Although my journey. . . as originally contemplated ended at Ching-tu-fu, I could not resist the temptation of trying to add to it a trip through the south-westernmost portions of China, and to explore the mountains of Western Sz'chwan, as well as the provinces of Yün-nan and Kwei-chau. Besides hoping to contribute to the general knowledge of the geography, geology, and resources of these unknown regions, I wished to examine the metalliferous deposits that are widely spread through them, and to gather some information respecting the many independent tribes inhabiting South-Western China, and their languages. My final object, however, was to explore the road from Ta-li-fu to Burma. I had some difficulty in collecting the necessary information, but finally settled upon the plan to travel by way of Ning-yuen-fu to Ta-li-fu, a journey of about five days, and thence to go to Teng-yuè-chau [Momien], the last place reached by Major Sladen on his way from Bamo to Yün-nan. From that city I intended to go again eastward, by Yün-nan-fu and Kwei-yang-fu, the capitals of the provinces of Yün-nan and Kwei-chan, to Chung-king-fu on the Yangtzè.'[4]

The traveller had accomplished half his journey to Ning-yuan-fu when, on the high Siang-ling pass, he was involved in a collision with a body of Chinese troops, whose outrageous aggression on his party, and its consequences, compelled him to retrace his steps, and to give up a journey from which a richer harvest might perhaps have been expected than even from any that had preceded it.

The journey has since been made, and Ning-yuan

[4] *Letters to the Shanghai Chambers*, No. VII. p. 3.

has been visited by Mr. Baber, as we shall see; but we remain without any details of his journey. These details would be of great interest, for the country is secluded, and otherwise entirely unexplored; and to me and some others the interest would be of a still more special kind, because *Ning-yuan is* the capital of the valley and district of Kien-chang, which has been demonstrated (as I think), by Richthofen, to be the Gheindu or Caindu of Marco Polo, a country of which, with its cassia-buds and other spices, its strange Massagetic customs, its currency of gold rods and salt-loaves, the old traveller gives so remarkable an account.[5]

§ 35. In speaking of the labours and incidental journeys of the Roman Catholic missionaries, we have mentioned Abbé Desgodins, *a gentleman of great* intelligence, and who takes much interest in geography. A book was published at Verdun in 1872, professedly based upon his letters to his family. It contains a good deal of information for those who bring to its perusal some previous knowledge, to serve as amalgam in the process of extracting what is valuable; but it has been compiled by a relative of the missionary without much clear acquaintance with the subject, and contains a good deal of matter of a kind which appears to be due to this circumstance. The history of the Abbé Desgodins is not a little remarkable, and shows the persistent character of the man.

When first he quitted France as a recruit for the missions, in 1855, he was directed to proceed by way of British India, and to attempt to make his way to the mission establishments across the Tibetan highlands, in order to avoid the great détour and expense of the usual journey by the ports and broad interior of China. His first attempt was made by Darjeeling,

[5] See book ii. chap. 47, and the notes to the 2nd edition (vol. ii. p. 57).

where, as might have been expected, he had kindly relations with Mr. Bryan Hodgson, who was then living there. After various endeavours to negotiate admission to Tibet by the Sikkim frontier, he was obliged to give it up, and, accompanied by M. Bernard, an older member of the fraternity, proceeded to the North-West Provinces, in order to attempt an entrance by Simla and the Sutlej. The priests were at Agra when the mutiny of 1857 broke out, and spent the summer in the fort there, with the rest of the 'sahib-lōg.' After the relief, they were able to proceed to Simla, and went on by Rampúr to Chini on the Upper Sutlej. Here M. Desgodins was summoned back, and ordered to proceed by the more usual route to join his mission. We find him again at Agra in the hot weather of 1858, and then *doing* duty as Roman Catholic chaplain to a *British* force at Jhansi. From this he writes to his parents:

'You will think I am going to become a regular Crœsus when I tell you that the Government of John Bull gives me for my services as Military Chaplain 800 francs a month, or, as they say here, 320 rupees. . . . . However, when you know the state of things in India, and the prices, it is no small matter to make both ends meet; so my dear nephew must not count on a fortune from my savings. Moreover, I hope not to be long in John Bull's service, but soon to be able to join my mission; I shall feel richer there with next to nothing, than here with my 800 francs.'—*La Mission du Thibet*, p. 36.

Receiving a fresh summons from Bishop des Mazures he took his departure (after drawing at Agra a sum of about 1,000 rupees for his services with the army). During his journey to the interior he was arrested, imprisoned, and sent back to Canton. Starting again under a new disguise, he finally reached the residence of the Bishop, *near* the frontier of Tibet, in June 1860, five years after his departure from France.

§ 36. We now come to the journey of the gallant young traveller who, after being the first to open the

way from China to the Irawadi, had hardly taken the first step on his return when his blood was left upon the path.

In the spring of 1873 the Imperial Government in Yun-nan succeeded, as has already been noticed, in finally crushing the insurgents who had maintained their independence for some seventeen years.

The Government of India decided on now renewing the attempt to explore the road, and the facilities for trade between the Irawadi and China, which Major Sladen had been unable to carry out, owing to the state of political affairs when he visited Momien. Colonel Horace Browne, of the Pegu Commission, was appointed to lead the mission; and it was settled that an officer of the consular service should be sent across China to Bhamò to meet the mission there, and to accompany them back to China as interpreter and Chinese adviser.

The officer appointed to this duty was Augustus Raymond Margary, a young man of high character and promise. It is needless to detail a story still fresh in the public mind. His journey led him from Hankow across the Tung-ting Lake, and by the regions, hardly known to Europeans, of Western Hunan and Kwei-chau to Yun-nan-fu, and thence to Ta-li and Bhamò,—the first of Englishmen to accomplish the feat that had been the object of so many ambitions, and to pass from the Yang-tzŭ to the Irawadi.

Margary reached Yun-nan-fu on November 27, 1874, and writing home from this point he says: 'I quite enjoyed the journey; everywhere the people were charming, and the mandarins extremely civil, so that I had quite a triumphal progress.' The same good treatment was continued through Yun-nan. He started again on December 2, and on the 14th or 15th reached Chao-chau, 20 miles from Ta-li (which,

as the map will show, lies about ten miles off the direct road from Yun-nan-fu to the Burmese frontier). There was some unwillingness to let him visit that city, from a dread, probably real, of popular turbulence; but this was overcome; and he writes home, on returning to his quarters at Chao-chau:

'I visited the mandarins in turn, and had a most successful interview with all, but especially with the Tartar General, who treated me with extreme civility, very much in the style of a polished English gentleman receiving a younger man. I was perfectly delighted with his reception. He complimented me over and over again on my knowledge of Chinese, and . . . . said he hoped on my return I would spend a few days with him. . . . . "I should naturally wish to see everything, if I visited your country," said he, "and I shall have a house ready for you and your honoured officials when you return."'[6]

The General gave Margary the place of honour beside him. The Tao-tai, a young man, had omitted this courtesy.

He reached Momien on January 4, 1875, and Manwain, the place where he met his death seven weeks later, on the 11th. Here he was visited by 'a furious ex-brigand called Li-hsieh-tai, who attacked our last expedition in 1867, and has been rewarded lately for his services against the rebels with a military command all over the country.' This is the man who was afterwards loudly charged with the murder of Margary. On this occasion, to the traveller's great surprise, he prostrated himself, and paid him the highest honour.

On January 17 Margary reached Bhamò, safe and triumphant. 'You may imagine,' he writes, 'how full of delight I am at the happy results of my journey, and the glowing prospect ahead.'[7]

§ 37. After an unsuccessful attempt to proceed by a more southerly line from Bhamò, through Sawadi, Colonel Browne had to revert to the route by

[6] *Margary's Journals*, pp. 236, 278. [7] Page 308.

which Margary had come, and a start was made from Tsit-kau on the Bhamò River (Ma-mou or Sicaw of Captain Gill, II. p. 384) on February 16. The rest is best told in the words of the editor of his journals :

'Early on the morning of February 19 Margary crossed the frontier with no escort but his Chinese secretary and servants, who had been with him through his whole journey, and a few Burmese muleteers. The next morning brought letters from him, reporting all safe up to Seray. He had been well received there, and had passed on to Manwyne. The mission followed slowly, reaching Seray on the 21st. . . . . On the 22nd, in the early morning, the storm broke. The mission camp was almost surrounded by armed bands, while letters from the Burmese agent at Manwyne to the chief in command of their escort told that Margary had been brutally murdered at Manwyne on the previous day. But for the staunchness of the Burmese escort—who resisted all offers of their assailants of heavy bribes if they would draw off and allow them only to kill the 'foreign devils,'—and the gallantry of the fifteen Sikhs who formed their body-guard, the whole mission must have shared the fate of their comrade. . . . . At Bhamô they eagerly sought for all particulars of the murder, but without much success. The most trustworthy account was that of a Burmese who had seen Margary walking about Manwyne, sometimes with Chinese, sometimes alone, on the morning of the 21st. This man reported that he had left the town on his pony, to visit a hot spring at the invitation of some Chinese, who, as soon as they were outside the town, had knocked him off his pony and speared him.'

§ 38. Then followed Sir T. Wade's unwearied negotiations with the Chinese Ministers, and the deputation of the Hon. T. G. Grosvenor, accompanied by Messrs. Baber and Davenport, to be present at the Chinese investigation at Yun-nan-fu.

The Chinese Government had given the strongest assurances that the investigation should be conducted with a view to the production of trustworthy witnesses, and the punishment of the real offenders. But the fact was far otherwise. No witness of the murder was allowed to be produced. The story which Mr. Grosvenor was pressed to accept was that Margary had been murdered by savages ; that Li-hsieh-tai (or Li-chên-kou, as he was officially designated in China)

had organised the attack on Colonel Browne; that the Momien train-bands had not been moved out of Momien, but had stood there only on the defensive.

The manner in which the affair had been dealt with showed that what had happened in Yun-nan had been done, if not by the direct order, at least with the approval after the fact of the Central Government, and our Minister could only express his entire disbelief in the case put forward, and decline to agree to the execution of any of the persons whom the Chinese investigation professed to incriminate.

§ 39. The termination of the affair was one of the matters embraced in the 'Agreement of Chefoo,' signed September 13, 1876. This provided, among other things (Sect. I. ii.), that a proclamation should be issued by the Chinese Government, embodying a memorial of the Grand Secretary Li with an imperial decree in reply. These documents embraced a statement of the facts of the deputation and murder of Mr. Margary, a recognition of the gravity of the outrage, of the necessity of observing treaties, of the anxiety of the Imperial Court to maintain friendly relations with foreign powers, and of its regret for what had occurred, with an injunction on local authorities to give protection to foreign travellers, and to study the treaty of Tien-tsin. It was also agreed that for two years to come officers should be sent by the British Minister to different places in the provinces to see that this proclamation was posted.

This is the *Margary Proclamation*, so often referred to by Captain Gill in all the remoter part of his travels.

The agreement also provided (*ib.* iii.) that an imperial decree should be issued directing that whenever the British Government should send officers to Yun-nan the authorities of that province should

select an officer of rank to confer with them, and to conclude a satisfactory arrangement regarding trade.

The British Government was also (*ib.* iv.) to be at liberty for five years to station officers at Ta-li-fu, or other suitable place in Yun-nan, to observe the conditions of trade.

Passports having been obtained the preceding year for a mission from India to Yun-nan (Colonel Browne's), it would be open to the Viceroy of India to send such mission when he should see fit.

An indemnity (*ib.* v.) was to be paid on account of the families of those killed in Yun-nan, on account of the expenses occasioned by the Yun-nan affair, and on account of claims of British merchants arising out of the action of officers of the Chinese Government; and this indemnity was fixed at 200,000 taels.

When the case should be closed, an imperial letter of regret was to be carried by a mission to England (vi).

Under Sect. III. i., several free ports, including I-chang, on the Upper Yang-tzŭ, were added to those already constituted, and the British Government were authorised to establish a consular officer at Ch'ung-ch'ing, to watch the trade in Ssŭ-ch'uan.

Also by a separate article it was provided that the Tsung-li Yamen should, at the proper time, issue passports for a British mission of exploration, either by way of Peking through Kan-su and Koko Nor, or by way of Ssŭ-ch'uan to Tibet. Or if the mission should proceed by the Indian frontier to Tibet, the Yamen should write to the Chinese resident in Tibet, who should send officers to take due care of the mission, whilst passports also should be issued for the latter.

It is hardly necessary to say that no residents in Yun-nan have been appointed under this agreement;

nor has any mission again entered Yun-nan, nor any official mission of exploration been sent to Tibet.

§ 40. Going back a little, I may record that Mr. Grosvenor's mission to Yun-nan left Hankow November 5, 1875; reached Yun-nan-fu on March 6, 1876; Ta-li-fu on April 11; Momien on May 3; and Bhamò I don't know when, for I have searched the reports, as published, of all the members of the mission without being able to find the date.

Mr. Arthur Davenport, one of the members, has made an interesting report on the trading capabilities of the country traversed by it, forwarded by Sir T. Wade to the Foreign Office, October 9, 1876.

Another of the officers attached to Mr. Grosvenor's mission was fortunately Mr. E. Colborne Baber, a gentleman who seems thoroughly imbued with the true genius of travel, a spirit which leads him apparently to spend his holidays in exploring fresh fields and gathering fresh stores of knowledge, though we cannot say that he is as diligent in communicating it to the world. His notes on the latter part of the route followed by the Grosvenor mission (that between Ta-li and Momien) have been published by Her Majesty's command. These notes, and the maps which accompany them, give Mr. Baber *per saltum* a very high place among travellers capable of seeing, of surveying, and of describing with extraordinary vivacity and force. In fact, we are seldom happy enough to meet with a traveller who combines so many valuable characteristics. His report of the journey has as yet been given to the public only in the unattractive form of a Parliamentary paper, and its circulation even in that form has perhaps been restricted still more by the unusual price put upon the 30 pages which contain it. But I fervently hope that Mr. Baber will yet give to the world, whether officially or non-officially, a narrative not of this only, but of other journeys as well.

On one of these, accomplished in the autumn of 1877 from his consulate at Ch'ung-ch'ing, he succeeded in completing the journey which Richthofen was compelled to abandon, making his way from Ya-chau to Ning-yuan-fu. The fact of this journey being made was duly reported to the Foreign Office, and a detailed narrative and map were promised. But these have never reached the Foreign Office, so I borrow from a letter of Mr. Baber's to Captain Gill the only particulars available, hoping that the hint thus given may help at least to obtain something more than these crumbs for hungry geographers:

'Since I reached Ch'êng-tu and received your memorable note accounting for your sudden flight, I have never ceased to wonder why you selected the roundabout route by the well-beaten Lit'ang track, instead of taking the direct road to Tali by Ning-yuan-fu. The latter is absolutely unknown to Europeans, is very easy, and less than half the distance *viâ* Lit'ang. Even if you had waited ten days for me at Ch'êng-tu, you would still have saved a month, and would have travelled easily through an entirely new country all the way from Ch'ing-ch'i-hsien (at the foot of the first high pass called Ta-hsiang-ling) to Tali.

'. . . . . Often regretting you I trudged down to Ning-yuan-fu, through a glorious hill and valley region, inhabited by Chinese soldier colonists, and those interesting mountainers, the independent Lolos. Ning-yuan lies on the east side of a rich valley about four miles wide, which extends, with unimportant narrows and low passes, as far doubtless as the Yangtzŭ; but on reaching Hui-li-chou, I turned east and struck into the poorest conceivable region of bare sandstone hills, among which we had some difficulty in procuring food. At Hui-li the rains began, and continued with few intervals all the rest of the way. . . . . I struck the Great River in lat. 26°54′, and at this point obtained a good series of lunar distances, the only chance I met with on the whole journey.

'Crossing the stream, I determined to follow its course, as nearly as possible, to Ping-shan.[8] But we had to quit its banks immediately on account of a flood, and plunge into a desperate maze of mountains, leading to a high plateau, in which most of my coolies, unable to procure provisions, deserted me. I pressed on with diminished forces, through rain and dense fogs, and soon found myself in clover. The skies cleared, range after range of snowy mountains shot up. I bought a sheep for 200 cash, drank more buckwheat whisky than I fear you would deem reputable, and one

[8] The highest point reached by Blakiston. See above, p. [55].

glorious day scrambled down a portentous gorge on to the Yangtzŭ, running fifty miles east of the position assigned to it by geographers. You will be able to form an opinion of the errors of the map when I tell you that Chao-t'ung, Yung-shan, and Lui-po-ling[a] are nearly on the same meridian.

'I had still many a stiff climb before me, but I reached Ping-shan in good order, had an interview with the Lolo hostages detained there, most of whom are the same that I saw in January, 1875, and then dropped comfortably down stream to the old quarters in Ch'ung-ch'ing. I am now working at report and map, which latter comes out most satisfactorily.'[1]

We wish it *would* come out!

In another letter of Mr. Baber's published in a Shanghai newspaper, he affords a few words more on the subject of this interesting journey:

'. . . . . Passing Ning-yuan-fu I went to Hui-li-chow; then turned east and crossed the Yangtzŭ into Yünnan not far from Tung-ch'uan.[2] Thence through the wildest and poorest country imaginable, the great slave-hunting ground from which the Lolos carry off their Chinese bondsmen—a country of shepherds, potatoes, poisonous honey, lonely downs, great snowy mountains, silver-mines, and almost incessant rains. . . : No European has ever been in that region before myself, not even the Jesuit surveyors; the course of the Yangtzŭ, there called the Golden River, as laid down in their maps, is a bold assumption, and altogether incorrect. A line drawn S.W. from a mile or two above Ping-shan will indicate its general direction, but it winds about among those grand gorges with the most haughty contempt for the Jesuits' maps.'

§ 41. Mr. Baber in 1868 made another important journey, of which he speaks thus[3]:

'I returned to this super-heated, and for the moment typhus-stricken city on the 25th. I have no time to write at length to you. Sufficient to say that my journey, begun as a holiday, and speedily eventuating in very serious hard work, has been very interesting. I have collected reams of information, and my chart, depending for longitude on lunars, D.R., and chronometric differences, comes out in a manner which astonishes me beyond measure. Assuming as the true longitude deduced from lunars E. and W., which

[a] Chao-t'ung and Lui-po-ling will be found in the general map attached to this book as *Chow-toong* and *Lui-po*.

[1] Dated Ch'ung-ch'ing, November 28, 1877.

[2] Between Hui-li-chau and Tong-ch'uan Mr. Baber's route must have been the same, or nearly the same, as that of Lieutenant Garnier on the way to and from Tali (see p. [58] above).

[3] Letter to Capt. Gill, dated Ch'ung-ch'ing, June 28, 1878.

agree mutually to a fraction of a minute (i.e., 0° 1′ 0″) and which were taken somewhere near the longitude of Ta-chien-lu, I plotted out the route-chart on a Mercator's projection, and you are capable of judging of my delighted surprise when I found that it brought the position of Swi-fu (Blakiston's Sü-chow, on the Yangtzŭ) into precisely his position. I could not separate the points with a divider. It is beautiful!'

This last journey has been reported, but alas! only in abstract, in a second Parliamentary paper. Mr. Baber started on his holiday with the intention of making a rough survey of the river (Min, Wen, or what not) between Kia-ting and Swi-fu (Sü-chow, Sioo-choo of maps), and of crossing the mountains westward from Kia-ting to Fu-liu (not in the maps) in long. 103°. Near the last place Mr. Baber was robbed of his travelling funds and other property, a misfortune which he turned to good account. Though detained for some time, whilst a communication was made to the governor-general of the province (of Yünnan), and to an old friend who occupied the office of Tao-tai, after eleven days the messenger returned with a very considerate letter, and a loan of money from the Tao-tai, and with orders from the governor-general for the apprehension of the burglars.

'The magistrate had received such stringent orders to make good my losses, that a scheme I had formed of deriving advantage from the misadventure, by refusing reimbursement, and insisting that I had nothing for it but to go on to Ta-chien-lu and obtain funds, would not even bear proposal. Very conveniently, however, he could not pay me on the spot, but wished me to wait a few weeks until the money arrived from Yueh-hsi-Ting. This I altogether declined to do, and the end of the negotiation was, that I offered to travel on to Ta-chien-lu, and to receive payment on my return.'

Mr. Baber accordingly travelled north by a mountain-path till he struck the high road between Ta-chien-lu and Lit'ang (that followed by Captain Gill), and he walked into the former town on April 23, 1878, staying there three weeks, and returning by the high road to Fu-liu, where the

magistrate duly paid over the amount of his loss—viz. 170 taels. He returned to Kia-ting by the way he had come, and the meeting with a Lolo chief afforded an opportunity of making notes of the customs and language of his tribe.

The following passage, describing the first transition from a Chinese to a Tibetan atmosphere, is a good specimen of the style which makes Mr. Baber's reports, whilst abounding in valuable information, almost as unique among blue-books as the autobiography of his illustrious namesake—I suppose we cannot say ancestor—is among Asiatic volumes:

'The remainder of the journey was impeded by nothing worse than natural difficulties, such as fevers and the extreme ruggedness of the mountain ranges. We quitted cultivation at the foot of a pine-forest, through which we travelled three days, ascending continually until we came to a snowy pass—the only pass in the country which, as the natives say, 'hang-jên,' stops people's breathing. Descending its northern slope, we soon found that we had left China behind. There were no Chinese to be seen. The valley was nearly all pasture-land, on which were grazing herds of hairy animals, resembling immense goats. These I rightly conjectured to be yaks. On entering a hut, I found it impossible to communicate with the family, even a Sifan, whom I had brought with me, being unintelligible to them; but they were polite enough to rescue me from the attack of the largest dogs I have ever seen, and to regale me with barleymeal in a wooden bowl, which I had to wash down with a broth made of butter, salt, and tea-twigs. Further on we met a company of cavaliers, armed with matchlock and sabre, and decorated with profuse ornaments in silver, coral, and turquoise; a troop of women followed on foot, making merry at my expense. A mile or two further, and I came to a great heap of slates, inscribed with Sanskrit characters, whereupon I began to understand that we were in Thibet; for although Thibet proper is many hundred miles west of this point, yet traces of Thibetan race and language extend right up to the bank of the Tatu River—a fact which I had not been led to expect.'

§ 42. In this review we have had occasion to speak frequently and largely of the enterprising devotion of the Roman Catholic missionary priests in the obscure regions with which we have had to do. It has been the fortune of the present writer to spend

many years in a Roman Catholic country without feeling in the least degree that attraction to the Roman Church which influences some,—indeed, he might speak much more strongly the other way. But it is with pleasure and reverence that one contemplates their labour and devotion in fields where these are exercised so much to the side of good, and where there is no provocation to intolerance or to controversy except with the heathen; no room for that odious spirit which in other regions has led the priests of this Church to take advantage of openings made by others to step in and mar results to the best of their power. The recognition of the labours and devotion of which we spoke just now has often led to sarcastic contrast of their work with that of Protestant missionaries, to the disparagement of the latter,—such as occurs not unfrequently in the narrative of Mr. Cooper; in this I have no sympathy. There may be much which the members of Protestant missions should carefully study (and which some of them probably have often studied) in the results that provoke such comparisons, but it is a shallow judgment that condemns them on a superficial view of those results. In any case, the discussion would here be out of place, and I have no intention of entering on it. Though it is only of late years that Protestant missionaries in China have contributed to our geographical knowledge of the western frontier, we must not overlook what they have done. Mr. Williamson's excellent work[4] does not reach our limits, as he was not nearer than Si-ngan-fu. But my valued friend Mr. Alexander Wylie, long agent at Shanghai of the Bible Society, was one of the earliest in our day to visit Sŭ-ch'uan, and to give us an account of its highly civilised capital, Ch'êng-tu. His visit occurred in 1868.[5] More recently, some of

[4] *Journeys in North China, Manchuria, &c.*, London, 1870.

[5] See *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xiv. p. 168 *seq.*

the numerous agents of the society called the China Inland Mission have been active in the reconnaissance of these outlying regions.

Mr. McCarthy, one of the agents of this society, was the first non-official traveller to accomplish the journey to Bhamò. This he did from Ch'ung-ch'ing on foot, travelling south to Kwei-yang-fu, and then onwards to Yün-nan-fu and Ta-li, and so forth, reaching Bhamò on August 26, 1877, a little more than two months before Captain Gill's arrival at that place. Mr. McCarthy wore the Chinese dress, as the members of his mission appear frequently to do, but made the character and object of his journey generally known. He was nearly everywhere treated with civility, often with kindness. 'Throughout the whole journey,' he says, 'I have not once had to appeal to an officer for help of any kind, and in no case has any officer put an obstacle in my way.'[6]

Mr. Cameron, another agent of the same society, followed Captain Gill not long after that officer, leaving Ch'êng-tu, on September 13, 1877, and after an unsuccessful attempt to make the directer road to Ta-chien-lu, had to adopt the usual and more circuitous line by Ya-chau, taken by Captain Gill. He also followed in Captain Gill's traces to Lit'ang, Bat'ang, and A-tun-tzŭ. He was kindly and courteously received by the French priest at Bat'ang (M. Desgodins). At A-tun-tzŭ the solitary traveller was laid up for many days with a bad attack of fever. On his recovery his further route deviated from Captain Gill's; as he went further to the west, by Wei-si, where Cooper was imprisoned in 1868. He

[6] Letter from the traveller to Mr. T. T. Cooper, British Agent at Bhamò, dated September 4, 1877, in *China's Millions*, the periodical of Mr. McCarthy's Society, for 1878, p. 61. Mr. McCarthy also read an account of his journey before the Royal Geographical Society; see the *Proceedings* (August), 1879, pp. 489 *seqq.*

reached Ta-li-fu on December 23, and Bhamò at the end of January, 1878. Mr. Cameron's journal is that of a simple and zealous man, and from his being without a companion, and thus seeing the more of the people, has many interesting passages. But there is hardly any recognition of geography in it; less a good deal than in Huc's narrative. For example, the passage of the famous Yar-lung Kiang is only noticed as that of 'a small river' below a place called Hok'eo.[7]

§ 43. The long passage through which we have conducted our readers—or some of them at least, we trust—in this introductory essay, must not close without a brief section devoted to my friend Captain Gill's own journeys.

His first journey, in the north of Pe-chih-li, to the borders of Liao-tong, and the sea-terminus of the Great Wall, was but a trial of his powers. His ascent of the Yang-tzŭ, though full of interesting detail, is on a line that has been described by several predecessors since Blakiston. The more important and novel itinerary begins with his excursion from Ching-tu to the Northern Alps, to those Min mountains of the ancient Yü-Kung, from which the Kiang of the Chinese—'The River' *par excellence*—flows down into Ssŭ-ch'uan. I am not aware of any traveller who has preceded him in this part of China.

Captain Gill on this occasion came into the land of the highland races whom the Chinese call Man-tzŭ and Si-fan. It is difficult to grasp the Chinese ethnological distinctions, though doubtless there is some principle at the bottom of those distinctions. The races generally along the western frontier are, as

[7] See Capt. Gill, Vol. II. p. 137. Mr. Cameron's journal is published in *China's Millions* for 1879, pp. 65 *seq.*, 97 *seq.*, 109 *seq.*

Richthofen tells us,[8] classed by the Chinese as *Lolo*, *Man-tzŭ*, *Si-fan*, and *Tibetan*.

The Lolo are furthest to the south, and occupy the mountains west of the Min, and west of the north-running section of the Kin-sha—fiercely independent caterans, a barrier to all direct intercourse across their hills, and frequent in their raids on the Chinese population below. Further south in Yün-nan the term *Lolo* seems to be generally applied by the Chinese to tribes of Shan blood; but whether this is true in the present case may be doubted. We await with great interest the result of Mr. Baber's inquiries about these people. Captain Gill did not come in contact with them.

The *Man-tzŭ* are regarded by the Chinese as the descendants of the ancient occupants of the province of Ssŭ-ch'uan, and Mr. Wylie has drawn attention to the numerous cave dwellings which are ascribed to them in the valley of the Min River. The name is applied to the tribes which occupy the high mountains on the west of the province up to about 32° lat. North of that parallel, beginning a little south of Sung-pan-ting, the extreme point of Captain Gill's excursion in this direction, are the Si-fan ('western aliens'), who extend into the Koko-nur basin, through an alpine country which remains virgin as regards all European exploration.

§ 44. Both terms, Man-tzŭ and Si-fan, seem, however, to be used somewhat loosely or ambiguously.

Thus, Man-tzŭ is applied to some tribes which are not Tibetan, whilst it is also applied to people, like those on the Ta-chien-lu road, who are distinctly Tibetan.[9]

[8] *Letters to Shanghai Chamber of Commerce*, No. vii. p. 67. Shanghai, 1872.

[9] The *Description du Tübet*, translated by Klaproth, says expressly

Thus, also, Si-fan appears to be sometimes applied to the whole body of tribes, of differing languages, who occupy the alpine country between Koko-nur and the Lolo mountain country, and sometimes distinctively to a Tibetan-speaking race who form a large part of the occupants of that country on the north-east of Tibet, and in the Koko-nur basin, the *Tangutans* of Colonel Prejevalsky.[1] And in this sense it is used in Captain Gill's book; for the Si-fan of whom he speaks use a Tibetan dialect, as will presently be manifest, and also (from specimens that he brought away with him) use the Tibetan character. They seem to correspond to the *Amdoans* of Mr. Bryan Hodgson, in the passage which I am about to quote.

This passage exemplifies the wider sense of the term Si-fan :[2]

'From Khokho-núr to Yúnnán, the conterminous frontier of China and Tibet is successively and *continuously* occupied (going from north to south) by the Sókpa. . . . . ; by the *Amdoans*, who for the most part now speak Tibetan; by the Thochú; by the Gyárúng; and by the Mányák. . . . . The people of Sókyúl, of Ámdo, of Thóchú, of Gyárúng, and of Mányak, who are under chiefs of their own, styled *Gyábo* or King, *sinice* 'Wang,' bear among the Chinese the common designation of Sifán, or Western aliens; and the Tibetans frequently denominate the whole of them *Gyárúng-bo*, from the superior importance of the special tribe of Gyarung. . . . The word *Gyá*, in the language of Tibet, is equivalent to that of *Fan* (*aliennis, barbaros*) in the language of China.'[3]

The fact mentioned in the last lines of the extract, if correct (and no one's statements are more full

that the people about Ta-chien-lu belong to the same *souche* as the Tibetans, and have the same manners (p. 266). Cooper, on this road, uses *Man-tzŭ* as the Chinese synonym of Tibetan (see p. 174, *et passim*). But ethnologically, *Tibetan* is analogous in value to *Latin*.

[1] *Prejevalsky's Travels*, translated by Mr. Delmar Morgan, vol. ii. *passim*, and note at p. 301.

[2] Mr. Baber again, in his printed letter, quoted from in § 89, calls the tribal chief with whom he had to do, a long way south of Ta-chien-lu, a *Si-fan*.

[3] *Hodgson's Essays*, 1874, part ii., pp. 60-67.

of knowledge or more carefully weighed in general than Mr. Hodgson's), would imply that the Tibetans proper do not regard these Si-fan tribes as of their own blood, even those of them who now speak Tibetan; and possibly we may have to apply this to the Man-tzŭ also adjoining the Ta-chien-lu road. Mr. Hodgson, in speaking of some of the authorities for the vocabularies which he gives of the Si-fan languages, tells us that his *Gyárung* came from Tazar, north of Tachindo (i.e. of Ta-chien-lu), whilst his *Mánya-ker* was a mendicant friar (of the heretical Bonpa sect), a native of Ra'kho, six days south of Tachindo. These are the only data I find as to the position of the two tribes named. We shall presently find a third as to the position of the Tho-chu, which also will fall into its proper place in Hodgson's series, and confirm his accuracy.

I proceed now to insert the numerals of three of the tribes as collected orally by Captain Gill (A, B, C);[4] to which I add for comparison the spoken Tibetan (D), and the Tho-chu (E), from Hodgson's comparative vocabularies:

	A	B	C	D	E
1	chek	ár-gú	kí	chik	ári
2	nyĭ	ner-gú	nyĕ	nyi	gnárí
3	sĕ	ksir-gú	song	sum	khshíri
4	zhĕ	sáir-gú	hgherh	zhyi	gzháré
5	knā	wár-gú	hná	gná	wáré
6	trŭ	shtŭr-gú	dru	thú (druk)	khatáré
7	dăn	shner-gú	ten	dún	stáré
8	gyot	kshár-gú	gyĕ	gyé	khráré
9	guh	rber-gú	kăr	gúh	rgúré
10	pchĕ	khád-gú	chĭ-thomba	chúh *or* chú-thámbá	hadúré
11	pchĕ-chek	khát-yi	kí-tze		
12	pchĕ-nyĕ	khá-ner	chu-nye		
20	nyĕ-shĕ	ner-sá *or* ne-sá	nye-ka-thomba	nyi-shú	

[4] A is the language of the 'Man-tzŭ' at Li-fan-fu; B that of the 'Outer Man-tzŭ' there—or people further west; C that of the 'Si-fan' about Sung-pan-ting.

Now the first thing apparent here is that A and C—i.e. the so-called 'Man-tzŭ' of Li-fan-fu, and the 'Si-fan,' are both Tibetan dialects.

Next, a comparison with E shows that the 'outer Man-tzŭ' of Li-fan-fu are the race which Hodgson calls Tho-chu, and that their language is not Tibetan. They will be near Li-fan-fu, in their place according to Hodgson's series from north to south, the 'Si-fan' being assumed to be his *Amdoans*, whilst his *Gyarung*, north of Ta-chien-lu, are probably the Man-tzŭ of Abbé David at Mou-pin; and his *Manyak* are probably Mr. Baber's 'Si-fan,' south of Ta-chien-lu.

Again, we observe that though the essential parts of the numerals in B and E are identical, the persistent affixes (or, as Hodgson calls them, 'servile' affixes) are different—*gú* in the one, *re* or *ri* in the other. In his comparative table we find the servile affix *ku* in the numerals of another language—a Chinese dialect which he called *Gyami*; and in the *Manyak* we find a similar affix *bi*.[5]

§ 45. On his return to Ch'êng-tu Captain Gill was joined by Mr. Mesny, a gentleman from Jersey, who has passed a good many years in the interior of China, and particularly at Kwei-yang-fu, in the service of the Chinese Government.

Captain Gill had intended in his preface to render his thanks and a tribute of praise to his companion for the assistance which was derived from him during the journey from Ch'êng-tu to Bhamò. And now that circumstances have caused this prefatory essay to be written by another hand, he still desires that

[5] Thus 1, tábí; 2, nabí; 3, síbi; 4, rêbi; 5, gnábi; 6, trúbi; 7, skwibí; 8, zibi; 9, gubi; 10, chêchibi. Here, comparing with D, the essential part of 2, 3, 5, 6, 9 and 10 is evidently Tibetan; the others diverge. These 'servile' affixes perhaps correspond to the numeral affixes or co-efficients which are necessary to the use of numerals in Chinese, Burmese, Malay, Mexican, &c., and which change with the class of objects indicated. This would account for the variation between B and E. China 'Pigeon English' replaces the whole of these co-efficients by the universal 'piecey.'

the following words of his own may be introduced here:

'If Mr. Mesny's name occurs but rarely in my book, it is but because he was so thoroughly and completely identified with myself that it seldom occurred to me to refer to my companion otherwise than as included in the pronoun 'we.' But I should be loth to let slip this opportunity of thanking the companion of so many long and weary marches for the persistence with which he seconded my efforts to achieve a rapid and successful journey; for his patience under difficulties and some real trials, and for the courage he showed when it was called for. Above all I desire to say how much I feel that, in our dealings with the Chinese officials, the friendly relations we were able to maintain with them, and the aid we were able to obtain from them, were in large measure due to Mr. Mesny. Especially in the negotiation for our passage between Yün-Nan and Burma, was Mr. Mesny's help invaluable. And I feel that whatever credit may attach to the successful accomplishment of the journey, a very large share of it is due to Mr. Mesny, who, for the love of travel alone, gave up a remunerative employment under the Chinese Government to become my companion. As long as the events of those sixteen weeks shall have a place in my memory, so long will the kindly support of my companion be among the freshest and pleasantest of them all.'

Hitherto, Captain Gill's aspirations had been directed to a journey through Kan-suh to Kashgaria, and thence through the Russian dominions to Europe. But the troubled aspect of affairs between Russia and England, which had become more imminent, now threatened to render this issue impracticable; whilst at a time of possible war, when duty might be calling him to quite another field in the west, he felt especially unwilling to risk being shut up in some Central-Asiatic *cul-de-sac*. Thus, though all preparations had been made for the long journey, he was forced to the conclusion that his steps must be directed homewards. Fortunately, however, this homeward journey might be made by a route which had never yet been successfully achieved: that, namely, which Cooper had attempted nine years before, by Lit'ang, Bat'ang, and Ta-li. So the start from Ch'êng-tu for England, *viâ* the Irawadi, was made July 10, 1877.

§ 46. The first place of importance reached was Ya-chau, the *entrepôt* and starting point of the trade with Tibet. The staple of this trade is the brick-tea, or rather cake-tea (afterwards broken up into brick-tea). Captain Gill has given some interesting particulars of this (II. 47); as he has in a previous part of his book (I. 176 *seq.*) regarding a similar manufacture carried on by the Russians established at Hankow for the market of Mongolia.

Whilst I was writing these paragraphs a report was put into my hands, in which Mr. Baber gives most curious details respecting this Tibetan tea-trade.[6] The tea grown for it is peculiar. It is not derived from the carefully manipulated leaves of carefully tended gardens, but from scrubby, straggling, and uncared-for trees, allowed to attain a height of nine or ten feet and more. Even of these plants only the inferior produce is devoted to the use of the barbarian: in fact, what is mere refuse. 'I saw great quantities of this,' writes Mr. Baber, 'being brought in from the country on the backs of coolies, in bundles eight feet long by nearly a yard broad, and supposed it to be fuel; it looks like brushwood, and is, in fact, merely branches broken off the trees and dried in the sun, without any pretence at picking. It sells in Yung-ching for 2000 cash a pecul at the outside, and its quality may be judged from a comparison of this price with that of the common tea drunk by the poorer classes in the neighbourhood, which is about 20,000 cash a pecul.'

Mr. Baber then describes the process of pressing this stuff into the cakes or *pao* spoken of by Captain Gill. At Ta-chien-lu these cakes are cut into the portions—about nine inches by seven by three—which the Chinese call *ch'uan*, or 'bricks,' 'containing a good deal more stick than leaf.' Mr. Baber cor-

[6] In supplement to *Calcutta Gazette*, November 8, 1879.

roborates Captain Gill's estimate of the extraordinary weights carried by the porters of these *pao* up to Ta-chien-lu, mentioning a case in which he overtook a somewhat slenderly built carrier freighted with 22 of the Ya-chau packages, which must at the lowest computation have exceeded 400lbs. in weight![7]

The quantity which annually paid duty at Ta-chien-lu he calculated on good comparative data at about 10,000,000 lbs., worth at that place £160,000.

A good deal besides is smuggled in by Chinese officials, for it is by means of this tea that those gentlemen feather their nests. Of these administrators and their gains the Tibetans say, 'They come to our country without breeks, and go away with a thousand baggage-yaks.'

§ 47. Mr. Baber, like Captain Gill, speaks of the remarkable manner in which the British-Indian rupee has become the currency of Tibet—a circumstance of which my friend General Hyde was probably not aware in his endeavours to estimate the existing amount of current rupees for the Silver Committee of 1876. 'Those (rupees) which bear a crowned presentment of Her Majesty are named *Lama tob-du*, or 'vagabond Lama,' the crown having been mistaken for the head-gear of a religious mendicant.'

Before the introduction of the rupee, tea-bricks were used as currency (just as Marco Polo tells us that in an adjoining region loaves of salt were used in his time), and 'even now in Bat'ang a brick of ordinary tea is not merely worth a rupee, but in a certain sense *is* a rupee, being accepted without minute regard to weight, just like the silver coin, as a legal tender. Since the influx of rupees this tea-coinage has been very seriously debased, having now lost 25

[7] The *pao* purport to weigh each 18 catties, or 24 lbs., as Captain Gill states. But this, according to Mr. Baber, is when saturated. The theoretical weight is a good deal reduced when they are dry.

per cent. of its original weight. The system of double monetary standard is approaching its end, at any rate in Tibet; for in May last the Lamas of the Bat'ang monastery, having hoarded a great treasure of bricks, found it impossible to exchange them at par, and had to put up with a loss of 30 per cent.'

Mr. Baber has some judicious remarks as to the outlet for Indian tea into Western Tibet. The obstacle to this, as well as to the admission of European travellers, is the jealous hostility of the Lamas, jealous of power, jealous of enlightenment, jealous, above all, of their monopoly of trade. It is evidently a mistake to suppose that the main difficulty lies in Chinese aversion to open the landward frontier, real as that probably is. The feeling among the Lama hierarchy is evidently very different from what it was in the days of Turner and Bogle; and judging from the reports of both Captain Gill and Mr. Cooper, their rule over the people is now become intolerably oppressive.

We must not lengthen this too long discourse, but the temptation is great to draw upon Mr. Baber, whose reports, whilst they convey a remarkable amount of information, are full of good sense, and as diverting as any story-book!

One fact more, however, we must borrow, before bidding him a reluctant adieu; and that is his discovery (Fortuna favet fortibus!) upon his last journey—see § 39 above—of two singular local qualities of tea, one of which is naturally provided with sugar, and the other with a flavour of milk or, more exactly, of butter!

§ 48. Ta-chien-lu, Captain Gill's first place of halt after leaving Ch'êng-tu, is a name that is becoming familiar to the public ear, as the Chinese gate of Tibet, on the Ssŭ-ch'uan frontier. Politically speaking it is more correctly the gate between the 'regulation

Province, of Ssŭ-ch'uan, and the Chinese 'non-regulation Province' of the Tibetan marches. Captain Gill has told the story of the Chinese etymology of the name (II. 76-77), probably fanciful, like many other Chinese (and many other non-Chinese) etymologies that find currency. The name appears from the Tibetan side as *Tarchenton*, *Tazedo* or *Tazedeu*, *Darchando*, and *Tachindo*, and is probably purely Tibetan.[8]

The place stands itself at a height of 8,340 feet above the sea-level, but the second march westwards carries the traveller to the summit-level of the great Tibetan table-land, on which, with the exception of one or two early dips into the gorges of great rivers, he might continue his way, did Lamas and others withdraw their opposition, without ever descending materially below 11,000 feet, until he should hail the Russian outposts on the northern skirts of Pamir, 1,800 miles away. This great plateau here droops southward as far as lat. 29°, and below that stends out a great buttress or lower terrace, still ranging 6,000 feet and upwards above the sea, which embraces, roughly speaking, nearly the whole of Yün-nan.[9] In the descent from the higher to the lower terrace, and for a long distance both above and below the zone of most sudden declivity, this region of the earth's crust seems in a remote age to have been cracked and split by huge rents or fissures, all running parallel to

[8] The termination *do* is common in Tibetan names—as Ghiamdo, Tsiamdo—and means a confluence. For the forms above see P. Horace della Penna in *Markham*, 2nd edit. p. 314; Pundit Nain Singh in *J. R. Geog. Soc.*, vol. xxxviii. p. 172; the Nepalese itineraries given by Mr. Hodgson in the *J.A.S. Bengal*, vol. xxv. pp. 488 and 495; and another itinerary from Katmandu, given by him at an earlier date in the *Asiatic Researches*, vol. xvii. p. 513 *seq.* This last itinerary is obviously not genuine beyond Lhassa, from which it makes 'Tázédó' only thirteen stages distant, in a beautifully cultivated plain, producing not only peas and potatoes, but rice and mangoes! But it gives us the Tibetan *name*.

[9] Height of Ta-li-fu, 6,666 feet; height of Yün-nan-fu, 6,630 feet; height of Tong-ch'uan, 6,740 feet; and height of Hui-li, 5,898 feet.

one another from north to south: for not only the valleys of those great rivers, of which we have said so much, but the gorges of their tributary streams exhibit this parallelism.[1]

§ 49. The ethnography of the manifold tribes on the mountain frontier of China, Burma, and Tibet, is a subject of great interest, and respecting which very little is yet known. We have touched it already in a loose way in a preceding paragraph regarding the tribes that look down upon Ssŭ-ch'uan, and we should be tempted to do so again in the region of the great rivers descending from Tibet into Yun-nan and Burma, but for the great scarcity of material. Two of these tribes—the Mossos (or Mu-sus) and the Li-sus—are most prominent, and are not without claims to civilisation. The Mu-*sus*, who call themselves *Náshi*, are said to have formerly possessed a kingdom, the capital of which was Li-kiang-fu, which the Tibetans, and hill-people generally, call Sadam. Their King bore the Chinese style of Mu-tien-Wang, and M. Desgodins, from whose authority these facts are derived, says that frequently, during his journeys on the banks of the Lan-t'sang and the Lu-Kiang, he has come upon the ruins of Mu-su forts and dwellings, 'as far north as Yerkalo, and much further,' therefore as far north as Kiangka, or nearly so. It is possible that they are the same as the barbarian *Mo*, who are mentioned in Pauthier's extracts from the annals of the Mongol dynasty as being occupants of the Li-kiang territory in the thirteenth century. The men seem to have adopted the Chinese dress and pigtail, and Cooper says they are 'quite Chinese in appearance;' but the women retain a picturesque and graceful costume, which from his description seems, like many of the other female costumes of the non-Chinese races of the Yun-nan frontier as depicted in

[1] Gill, Vol. II. p. 228.

Garnier's work, to have a strong analogy to the old fashions of Swiss and Pyrenean valleys, popular types for fancy-balls. Captain Gill met with some Mu-sus at and near Kudeu, on the Kin-sha, and he was struck by the European aspect of a lama (or quasi-lama) who visited him—'more like a Frenchman than a Tibetan.'[2] This recalled to him what Mr. Baber says of two women, called 'of Kutung,' whom he met outside Ta-li.[3] But the data will carry us no further.

The Li-sus, or Lissaus, are described by Dr. Anderson as 'a small hill-people, with fair, round, flat faces, high cheek-bones, and some little obliquity of the eye.' The men adopt the ordinary Shan dress, and the women, like those of the Mu-sus, a picturesque costume of their own.[4] In the upper parts of the great valleys the Li-sus seem intermixed with the Mu-sus, but they have a wide and sparse distribution further to the west, and further to the south.

§ 50. Vocabularies of their languages have been sent home by M. Desgodins, and, though I have not seen these, M. Terrien de la Couperie, who has paid much attention to the philology of the Chinese and bordering tribes, tells me that the two vocabularies have 70 per cent. of words common to both, and show a manifest connection both with some of the Miao-tzŭ tribes and with the

[2] Vol. ii. p. 270.

[3] 'Their oval and intelligent faces instantly reminded us of the so-called Caucasian type; and in every step and movement there was a decision and exactness widely different from the sluggish inaccentuation of the Chinese physique. The younger was particularly remarkable for a peculiarity of her long hair, which was naturally wavy, or "crimped," a feature which is never met with among the Chinese. While watching these people I felt in the presence of my own race.'—*Baber's Report*, 1878, p. 5.

It may not be inappropriate to add here that I have several times seen among Burmese women a perfectly *Roman* type of countenance, a thing I have never seen in a Burmese man.

[4] Anderson, *Exped. to Yunan*, Calcutta, p. 136.

Burmese. The last point is corroborated by the statement of Dr. Anderson regarding the Li-sus, that the similarity of the Li-su and Burmese languages is so great that it is hardly possible to avoid the conclusion that the two people have sprung from one stock.[5]

Captain Gill, when at Kudeu, obtained a remarkable manuscript, which he has presented to the British Museum.[6] I have seen the manuscript, but I derive the following account of it from the greater knowledge of M. Terrien de la Couperie, who is engaged in systematic study of the origin and relations of the Chinese characters, and is deeply interested in this document. It is written in an unknown hieroglyphic character, and consists of 18 pages, measuring about $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $3\frac{1}{2}$. The characters read from left to right; there are three lines on a page; the successive phrases or groups of characters being divided by vertical lines. Among the characters are many of an ideographic kind, which have a strong resemblance to the ancient Chinese characters called *chuen-tzŭ*. With these are mixed numerous Buddhistic emblems.

M. Terrien possesses another document in similar character, but less mixed with Buddhistic symbols, which was traced by M. Desgodins from the book of a *tomba*, or sorcerer, among the Náshi or Mu-su, a kind of writing which that missionary states to have become obsolete.[7] He considers Captain Gill's manuscript to be probably much older. It is not possible to say whence it came, because it may have been an object plundered in the long disorders of the Yun-nan frontier. But M. Terrien is inclined to regard it as a survival

[5] Anderson, u.s.

[6] Additional MSS. No. 2162.

[7] There is a bare allusion to the subject in the book *La Mission du Thibet*, where M. Desgodins speaks 'des livres de sorciers que j'ai eus entre les mains, mais dont je n'ai pu avoir la traduction' (p. 333).

of a very ancient ideographic system, perhaps connected with that of the Chinese in very remote times. The late Francis Garnier, during one of his later journeys in Hu-nan, was assured[8] that in certain caves in that province there were found chests containing books written in *European* characters, and judiciously suggests that these may have been books of the extinct aborigines, in some phonetic character. M. Terrien recalls this passage in connection with Captain Gill's manuscript. And he observes that a thorough study of the character, and of the dialects, for which we have as yet very little material, may be most important in its bearing on the ethnographic and linguistic history of ancient China. Very ancient Chinese traditions speak of these races as possessing written documents.[9]

§ 51. There must be an end to this commentary. I have become through circumstances, and especially through the traveller's friendly confidence in me, too closely associated with his work to put myself forward as a judge of its merits. But I am bound to call attention to some facts.

Captain Gill was weighted with serious disadvantage as a traveller in China by his unacquaintance with the language. No one could be more sensible of what he lost by this than he is. Yet he was singularly fortunate, during two large sections of his travels, in his interpreters,—having the aid of Mr. Baber in the voyage up the Yang-tzŭ, and that of Mr. Mesny across the Tibetan and Burmese frontier. And his success on a journey in which he has had no forerunner, and had no companion,—that from Ch'êng-tu to the north,—shows that he carried in his own person the elements of that success,—patience, temper, tact, and sympathy.

[8] *Bull. de la Soc. de Géog.*, January, 1874, p. 19.

[9] One recalls the tradition of the Karens, that they too once had a book, but a dog ate it!

It is needful to inform or remind readers,—at least the more serious portion of them,—that the bright personal narrative contained in these two volumes does not represent Captain Gill's scientific results. Let anyone who desires to appreciate the real character of his labours look at the report of his journey published in the 'Journal of the Royal Geographical Society' (vol. xlviii. pp. 57 *seq.*) The detailed maps which illustrate that and the present work have been constructed from the route-survey which Captain Gill kept up unbroken from his first departure from Ch'êng-tu towards the Northern Alps till his arrival at Ta-li-fu. From Ta-li-fu the weary task was abandoned, as the route-survey thence to Bhamò had already been accomplished by Mr. Baber, from whose work that portion of the survey is borrowed.

Observations for altitude were made with Casella's hypsometric thermometer, and with two aneroids: observations of the latter being taken three times daily when halting, and ten or twelve times on each day's march. From the readings so taken, after needful corrections, the altitudes of 330 places have been computed, affording data for the extensive sections exhibited.

The itinerary appended to the report in the 'Geographical Society's Journal' will be found to contain a mass of minute detail of the road travelled, and its natural features, filling, between Ch'êng-tu and Momien, forty-six pages of very close print. Those only who have tried can judge how much resolution is required to keep *up* the labour of such a record throughout a fatiguing journey of several months, in protracting the day's journey, and writing up the diary and itinerary every night, as was done by Captain Gill regularly, with two or three exceptions at most. Here I am happy to be able to

introduce some remarks from the high authority of Baron Richthofen :[1]

'Captain Gill's results have been of the highest interest to me, particularly those of his journey north of Chengtu, and of his route between Ta-tsien-lu and Atentzĕ. He is an acute observer of men and nature, and stands very high indeed by the accuracy and persistency with which he has carried through his surveying work. It is not quite easy to do this, and it requires the mind to be firmly set upon this one purpose. Many a famous traveller might learn in this respect from Captain Gill. The determination of so many altitudes is, too, a very important part of his work, and it has brought about results of extreme interest. I regret, however, that he did not put down on the map all that he was able to see. . . . I presume that Captain Gill . . . . wished by the tendency to the utmost possible exactness to abstain from laying down on his map whatever was lying at some distance from his road. I think it would be well if he could be induced to supply this want. This would be of great interest in the valley of the Upper Min, and the passage eastward of Sung-pan-ting, where indeed a few very elevated summits are marked on his maps.

'Altogether his journey is one of the most successful and useful which has been performed in Western China, and it is to be hoped that he will have a successor who will extend his explorations into the unknown regions west of the Min and north of the road to Bat'ang.'

Captain Gill himself would desire to put in the caution that his map must not be regarded as absolutely accurate. Allowance has to be made for the fact that much of his journey was accomplished in rain and fog ; some small part of it in the dark. But these are small drawbacks to the accuracy, none to the merits of such a performance. That such a work should have been kept up openly and continuously over so extensive a journey, speaks volumes for the tact as well as for the perseverance of the traveller.

§ 52. The anonymous writer who edited the journals of Augustus Margary, with so much judgment and good feeling, concludes his biographical sketch of the young man in words from which I extract the following :

'Whether, and how soon, his countrymen will be able to travel in honour and safety the route which he was the first to explore,

[1] Letter to the present writer, dated Bonn, November 15, 1879.

will depend upon the faithfulness with which they copy his example. As soon as Englishmen shall be able, as he did, to find 'the people everywhere charming, and the mandarins extremely civil' (p. 134)—in spite of all the serious and petty vexations, discomforts, and discourtesies which met him day after day, and which he had to brush aside with a firm hand, but without losing temper—the route will open out and become as safe to them as it proved to him on his lonely westward journey. For his short story, if read aright, and in spite of its violent ending, adds yet another testimony that a little genuine liking and sympathy for them, combined with firmness, will go further and do more with races of a different civilisation from our own, than treaties, gunboats, and grapeshot, without it. If the route is ever to be a durable and worthy monument of the man, it must be opened and used in his spirit, by fair means, and for beneficent ends.'

These are just and admirable words, and I think all candid readers of this narrative will recognise that my friend its author has been not unworthy, tested as those words would have him tested, to do his part in keeping open the track which Margary first explored. He has done that, and more. And I am happy to think that he also is still young, and thus, as this has not been his first adventure in the conquest of knowledge in distant regions, neither will it, I trust, be his last.

H. YULE.

December 18, 1879.

THE

RIVER OF GOLDEN SAND.

CHAPTER I.

OVER THE SEAS AND FAR AWAY.

China resolved on—Preliminary Visit to Berlin—Baron Ferdinand v. Richthofen—Marseilles, and Voyage in the 'Ava'—Sea-flames—The Straits—Chinese Practices first realised—Approach to Saigon—The City—Hong-Kong reached and quitted—Shanghai and its peculiar Conveyances—The Chinaman's Plait—Voyage to Chi-Fu—The Chi-Fu Convention—The Minister Li-Hung-Chang—Ceremonial of his Departure—Voyage to the Pei-Ho—Difficulties of Navigation up that River—Scenery—Arrival at Tien-Tsin—Choice of Conveyances—Carts of Northern China—Mongol Ponies—'Boy' found—Horse-buying—Scenes on the Tien-Tsin Bund—Risky Building and Chinese Devotion—Tien-Tsin Hotel—Preparation for Travel—Suspicious Wares—Arrangements for a Start completed.

WHY not China?

Such were the words addressed to me by a friend I met in Trafalgar Square early in May 1876.

Up to this moment I had never thought of China. My attention had never been directed to it, and my notions regarding it were crude in the extreme: dim ideas of pigtails, eternal plains, and willow trees; vague conceptions of bird's-nest soup and puppy pies. I had never been particularly attracted to the country, and naturally replied, 'Why should I go to China?'

At the time I gave the matter no further consideration, and it was with some surprise that, a fortnight

later, I was met with the same question; this time, however, my friend had some reasons to adduce, the result of which was that, on June 26, a fine breezy morning, I stood on the deck of the Ostend steamer lying in Dover harbour.

A fresh north-easterly breeze just crisped the tops of the waves, and a bright sun lighted up the Dover cliffs as they gradually merged into the mist. For the first time for many days, I had time to think, and when at last the cliffs were lost to view, I seemed to have launched into a new and unknown sea; for whither fate would lead my steps I could not say: all that was definite was, that I was going to Peking.

Through the kindness of Colonel Yule I was furnished with a letter of introduction to Baron von Richthofen, the greatest of modern explorers and geographers, whose long travels in China had made him the first authority on the country; and it was to make his acquaintance that now I bent my steps to Berlin.

It was a lovely summer day, and the haymakers were busily at work as we dashed past them, and past smiling villages, and lazy Belgian streams: here a quaint steamer with its paddles scarcely in the water, making more splashing and noise than a man-of-war; there a barge drifting slowly onwards towards the sea; now a country château with its trim lawn and bright flowers from which we could almost catch a breath of fragrance; through many a village where the stout Flemish horses drew the quaint long-backed country carts; by waving corn-fields where the blue corn-flowers seemed to nestle lovingly in the shadow of the wheat and barley, on through busy Liège to Verviers and Cologne, where I spent a few hours wandering about the quaint old streets, and then in the evening continued my journey to Berlin.

Some Japanese were my travelling companions, dressed in black coats, tall shiny hats, and white shirts, of which they seemed remarkably proud; they took off their boots, and placing their feet on the seat next me, we soon all fell asleep. In the morning they were pitiable objects to look upon, their black coats and neck-ties covered with dust, their faces shining with a greasy glow, their collars and wristbands without any visible signs of starch, and their thick black hair that had been carefully parted the night before now standing on end 'like quills upon the fretful porcupine;' and even then I thought that it was not all gain to the Japanese, when they abandoned their national dress and their ancient customs, and threw themselves recklessly into the arms of western civilisation.

I was fortunate in finding Baron von Richthofen in Berlin, and the week that I spent in his society passed only too quickly. Hour after hour he gave up his valuable time to me, and opened volumes from his rich store of information; day by day I grew wiser, and little by little true pictures of China and Chinese life formed themselves in my mind. Baron von Richthofen possesses in a remarkable manner the faculty of gathering up the details presented to his view; putting them together and generalising on them with rare judgment; forming, out of what would be, to a lesser genius, but scattered and unintelligible fragments, a uniform and comprehensive whole. During all my conversation with Baron von Richthofen, not one word passed his lips that was not gold seven times refined, not one hint was given me that did not subsequently prove its value; his kind thoughts for my comfort or amusement were never ceasing, and his refined and cultivated intellect and genial manner

rendered the recollections of my stay in the German capital some of the most pleasant of my life.

Leaving Berlin, I journeyed leisurely to Marseilles, awaiting a telegram without which I was unable to start. The delay was rather troublesome, as by this time I knew enough of China to be well aware that early in the winter the province of Pechili is entirely frozen up; and it was in that province that I intended to make my first journey.

At last the welcome telegram arrived, and on July 27 I found myself at Marseilles. I had never been there before, and although it was rather warm, I was pleasantly surprised with the town; for instead of a picturesque place, I had formed in my mind ideas of nothing but dirty streets and busy quays. The shop fronts are screened with the gayest of gay awnings, striped with blue, red, grey, and all sorts of colours; on the sides of some of the streets magnificent plane trees, as high as the four-storied houses, meet overhead and afford delightful shelter from the southern sun; and at a little distance there are some charming gardens, where now some glorious masses of geraniums were in their full beauty.

On July 30 the ship 'Ava,' of the Messagéries Maritimes, steamed out of Marseilles, having on board but a small number of first-class passengers, as this, the hottest time of the year in the Red Sea, is not a favourite one for travellers.

On a sea like glass we glided through the Straits of Bonifacio, steamed into the Bay of Naples, and left it again before the town was well awake. That morning's sun set like a ball of fire behind Stromboli. Scylla frowned, and Charybdis hissed, as if in impotent rage that coal and iron had robbed them of their terrors, and the lights of Messina shone awhile over

the summer sea; but one by one even these faded, and the last glimpse of Europe was gone from our view.

A voyage is always rather tedious, and during August the Red Sea can hardly be considered pleasant; the days went by, however, although there was but little incident to vary their monotony.

Before arriving at Galle, the sea was one night so phosphorescent, that none of the old sailors on board could recollect a similar scene. The vessel left a trail of fire far behind her in her wake; as her bows pierced the water she seemed to dash up liquid flames that danced about her sides as if by magic, every wave that broke illuminated itself and lit up a sheet of phosphorescent light, and all around, in every direction, as far as could be seen, fires innumerable seemed to sparkle in the ocean.

Passing through the Straits of Malacca, we steamed into Singapore on the morning of August 26, and I was rather disappointed with its scenery, of which I had heard so much. The entrance to the harbour is certainly exceedingly pretty; there is a wonderful richness in the verdure, and the trees at the water's edge contrast beautifully with the deep red of the soil. Perhaps it is, that after some days at sea people are always in a frame of mind to exaggerate the charms of the first land they see, or perhaps it is, that the ships being able to come within twenty or thirty yards of the shore, the beauties are more apparent than in other places.

Here I passed a delightful day, enjoying the hospitalities of the Governor, Sir William Jervois.

Government House is a fine building, on the top of a little hill looking over rich green trees and green grass, to the blue sea, the town of Singapore stretching out on one side along the edge of the harbour, where

there is a great deal of shipping and many boats. In the town there is an enormous Chinese population, and here for the first time I understood the mystery of using chopsticks. Up till now I had cherished the fond delusion that it was customary to take the rice up grain by grain ; I had sorely exercised my mind on the consideration of the length of time that a Chinaman would occupy in consuming a hearty meal. I was therefore much interested in watching the process. The bowl, something like a large teacup without a handle, is held in the left hand close underneath the chin, the chopsticks being used as a shovel, by which the rice is pushed into the mouth, an extraordinary gobbling noise accompanying the proceeding. The grains of rice, moreover, even when cooked by a Chinaman, are not invariably all separate, and it is easy for a skilful performer to take a good deal of rice between his two chopsticks. The method of holding the chopsticks is almost impossible of explanation, but the art is acquired with a very little practice, and, once learnt, it is not difficult to pick up the smallest grain.

In the afternoon I rode with the Governor to the Botanical Gardens, on a pony which upset the popular theory that all horses tremble in the presence of lions and tigers ; for he could with difficulty be kept away from the bars of a cage in which there was a tiger that had been presented to Sir William Jervois by a neighbouring rajah. In the evening I was obliged to take my leave, and steaming out of Singapore early the next morning, we arrived off Saigon on August 29.

The mouth of the river is rather pretty ; as the steamer runs up, on the starboard hand are hills about one hundred or two hundred feet high, covered with forest, in which there are here and there open patches

of beautiful green grass; the trees come down to the water's edge, the coast is broken into innumerable little creeks and bays, native villages are scattered about, and on the other side the low coast is seen two miles away. In a very short distance the hills disappear; the river, about half a mile wide, is very tortuous, and winds through a flat, swampy, uninteresting country, covered with low jungle, where I was told there were a great many tigers; but as Frenchmen seldom hunt savage beasts for sport, they probably exaggerate the number of them.

The town of Saigon lies fifty miles up the river, and is close to a very large and important Chinese town, the seat of ancient trade; it was for commercial purposes necessary to establish the colony here rather than at the mouth of the river, where there would have been a more picturesque, more convenient, and far more healthy site; strategically, too, there were good reasons for choosing this rather than Point St. Jacques at the entrance to the river, for with torpedoes, the navigation of the tortuous channel would be almost impossible to a hostile fleet, while an attack on the point from the open sea would be comparatively easy. The Messagéries Company wished to avoid the waste of time consequent on the navigation of this troublesome fifty miles, and applied to the French Government for permission to establish a station at Cape St. Jacques, and to perform the inland service in small steamers. There would have been no difficulty about this, for the roadstead is always safe, and small vessels can in any weather ascend to Saigon. The French Government, however, refused permission, and the mail steamers thus lose forty-eight hours on their passages, without any apparent compensating advantage.

As soon as we had anchored, a fellow-passenger accompanied me ashore, and we hired a carriage, that would in our India be called a shigram, drawn by the tiniest of tiny ponies, which, notwithstanding their diminutive size, galloped along at a rapid pace. Taking a drive round the town we saw Government House, a fine building, but not so imposing as ours at Singapore; this is, however, partly owing to the natural beauty of the Singapore situation. Here we noticed the marines on guard, in the stewy heat of this climate, dressed in dark blue cloth coats.

With regard to the town itself, the French have certainly made more of the little that nature has provided them with, than we have at Singapore of a much better site. The principal street of the town is a fine broad boulevard, with trees on both sides, where there are a few French shops amongst those of the Chinese. The public buildings are plain, and do not deserve much notice; there are of course cafés and restaurants, in as close imitation as circumstances permit, of the gay French capital. There is no gas at Saigon, as there is at Singapore, but the streets and houses are well lighted with petroleum. This is said to be a very unhealthy place, residents being liable to a form of dysentery that nothing appears to cure; the governors, whose salary is 8,000*l.*, are rarely able to remain more than two years. We found that, with an admirable idea of how most to inconvenience the public, the Post-Office was closed till 4.30 P.M., the officials being busy preparing their mails; so we took another drive, and when we returned we found that the *poste restante* business, the selling of stamps, and the receipt of valuable articles, were all conducted by one official at one little pigeon-hole.

People had been dropping in one by one during

the past hour, and the street now presented something the appearance of one of our west-end thoroughfares on the night of an entertainment, with a long string of carriages on each side of the road. When at length the pigeon-hole was opened, a crowd of Chinamen, French soldiers, sailors, officials, and people of all sorts fought for the services of the man inside; we also engaged in the conflict, and at length succeeded in posting our letters. Before returning to the ship we had to listen to the most doleful jeremiads of a sleepless night in store for us, from the size and virulence of the mosquitos, with which the river was said to swarm; visions of large dragon-flies, with the stings of scorpions, presented themselves to me as I turned in, but happily the reports were exaggerations, and we none of us suffered much.

Leaving Saigon we steamed on again to the East, passing the Ladrone Islands, famous in the days of yore, where the old Portuguese navigators first entered these waters, and where, finding themselves the unfortunate victims of the numerous pirates and murderers that cruised about among these narrow channels, they called this beautiful archipelago the Ladrone or Robber Islands.

The times have changed, but the nature of the people is not much altered; and though at a distance the fleet of junks, with their red sails bellying in the freshening breeze, might be mistaken for mackerel boats on our own English shores, and though by profession the people follow the peaceful avocation of fishing, they are still on occasions robbers, pirates, or buccaneers.

It was a delightful change at Hong Kong to pass a couple of days amongst kind friends; it was refreshing too, once more to see English soldiers looking

as smart as only English soldiers do; and after so many weeks of walking up and down the deck of a ship, a real hill was quite a treat. But our time was soon up, Hong Kong gradually disappeared, and we sailed away again over the blue waters, where the extraordinary number of fishing junks formed a marvellous sight. All day and all night the steamer passed through a swarm of these vessels that seemed to fringe the whole coast; at one time I counted 150 in sight in one quarter of the compass, and we were obliged to stop our engines two or three times to avoid the nets.

My journey in the 'Ava' was drawing to a close, and on the morning of September 8 we entered the Yang-Tzŏ-Chiang, or Ocean River, which here flows majestically through a perfectly flat country, cut up by innumerable small canals, where the vegetation appears wonderfully rich, and where there seem to be plenty of fine trees. No hedges or walls were to be seen dividing the fields, and on the river there were a great number of fishing and trading vessels, all of one shape, but of various sizes, with two, three, four, or five masts, stuck in without any regard to the angle at which they were stepped, and all the more picturesque on account of their irregularity.

At Shanghai I presented a letter of introduction to that most hospitable of firms, Gibb, Livingstone, and Co. Here I enjoyed a dinner on shore, and afterwards went on board the steamer that was to convey me to Chi-Fu.

A machine called a jinnyrickshaw is the usual public conveyance of Shanghai. This is an importation from Japan, and is admirably adapted for the flat country, where the roads are good, and coolie hire cheap. In Japan, I have been told, they are also used

on hilly ground. In shape they are like a buggy, but very much smaller, with room inside for one person only. One coolie gets into the shafts, and runs along at the rate of about six miles an hour; if the distance is long, he is usually accompanied by a companion who runs behind, and they take it turn about to draw the vehicle.

The jinnyrickshaw is, however, only for the rich; for poor people there is another description of conveyance. This is the wheelbarrow, so well known in all the plains of China, with a seat at each side of one high wheel, on which the people sit sideways as on an Irish car.

Except in Shanghai, the Chinese contrive that the wheels of these shall creak, for a Chinese coolie always seems to require some noise to assist him in his work; when carrying a load in the usual way, by means of a split bamboo over his shoulder, he gives a peculiar grunt at each step, and chair-coolies almost always do the same thing. I was told that in the early days of Shanghai, the noises made by coolies and creaking wheels became so great as to be at last utterly unendurable to European nerves, and a regulation was made, which was at first enforced with much difficulty, forbidding coolies to groan, or wheels to creak, within the boundaries of the Concession, and imposing fines for a breach of the rule. Inside the settlement both jinnyrickshaws and wheelbarrows abound; these are licensed, just as hackney carriages are in London; the tariff is fixed by law, and licences suspended for misconduct or breach of regulations. On my way to the steamer, in the cool of a glorious starlight night, the reverie into which I had been gently soothed by a fragrant Manilla, such as is rarely to be met with in England, was suddenly broken by a violent bump,

and I awoke to the fact that one of the wheels had suddenly come off the jinnyrickshaw. The driver, if such an appellation is permissible, did not seem at all disconcerted; he picked up his wheel, put it on, took a new linch-pin from some mysterious fold in his garment, whilst with a smart shake of his head he whipped the end of his plait into his hand. It was the work of a moment to unplait a little of it, break off a lock of his hair, and by the light of the paper lantern always carried, put the tie thus improvised through the hole in the linch-pin. In five minutes we were off again as if nothing had happened, and I learnt that a Chinaman can find a use for anything, even for his plait.

The plait was first imposed upon the Chinese as a badge of servitude by the Manchus when they took the country; but the origin of the appendage has been long forgotten—it is now valued almost as dearly as life, and to be without one is considered the sign of a rebel.

I was told that once a Chinese gentleman was riding in the settlement of Shanghai in a jinnyrickshaw, when he allowed his plait to fall over the side; it was a long one, and the end was soon caught in the axle, which gradually wound it up. The poor fellow shouted to the man drawing him to stop, but the coolie imagining that he was being urged to greater efforts, only went the faster, until the unfortunate occupant, with his plait nearly wound up to the end, and himself nearly dragged out of his carriage, was in a pitiable plight. A British sailor at this moment happened to pass that way, and observing the desperate predicament, with the readiness of resource for which nautical people are famed, he drew his knife and in an instant severed the plait from the Chinaman's head. He thought he had done a kindly act,

but instead of thanks he received little more than curses, and his life was not considered safe until his ship was well beyond the limits of the Shanghai river.

There were at this time three companies that owned steamers running between Tien-Tsin and Shanghai—one English, one American, and one Chinese. The 'Zin-Nan-Zing,' belonging to the English company, was the first to leave Shanghai after my arrival. I had engaged my passage by it, and we sailed at 4 A.M. on September 10. All the steamers here, including the magnificent vessels that ply on the Yang-Tzŏ between Han-Kow and Shanghai, are built on the American plan, with the first-class accommodation forward, where the passengers are free from smells of cookery, oil, or engines, but where there is this disadvantage, that if there is any pitching motion it is sure to make itself felt.

The coasts of Shantung are generally breezy, and soon we found ourselves in rather a heavy head sea that sent the spray flying over the deck, and reduced our speed to four or five knots; thanks to the pleasant captain, I was able to take shelter in the wheel-house, and read in comfort, until the thermometer suddenly descending to 74° F., the temperature felt bitterly cold after the steamy heat of Shanghai.

At about nine o'clock on the evening of September 12 we dropped our anchor in the quiet harbour of Chi-Fu. The wind had dropped, the clouds had cleared off, and the stars were shining brilliantly over the smooth water that reflected the riding lights of numerous merchant vessels lying here.

Chi-Fu is the watering-place of Shanghai, charmingly situated on a deep bay, sheltered on the north by a long low spit of land ending in some low hills; it is open to the N.E., and when the wind is from that

quarter a heavy sea comes rolling in, and prevents communication with the shore. To the E.N.E. are some rocky islands which protect the harbour from that quarter; at the head of the bay is about a mile of flat country closely cultivated and very green; and at the back a range of hills, which run down to the coast on either side, end in picturesque bluffs. To the west is the large and important Chinese town, where a fleet of quaint-looking junks were lying at anchor. The European quarter is small, containing not much more than the consulates, three hotels, and a few stores where European goods are sold at rather startling prices. Here, when the heat of Shanghai is at its worst, the wearied merchants find a pleasant and invigorating change in the fresh air and sea bathing.

The now celebrated Chi-Fu Convention was at this time being arranged, and Sir Thomas Wade, H.B.M. minister, Li-Hung-Chang, the celebrated Chinese minister, and some members of the other foreign legations were here, with three English, two French, and one German man-of-war in the harbour, besides Admiral Ryder's despatch boat the 'Vigilant,' and numerous Chinese war vessels. I found two very fair rooms in an hotel close to the European town; my quarters faced the sea, and I could look out upon the British flag floating proudly from the mast of the 'Audacious.'

I was furnished with letters of introduction to Sir Thomas Wade, whose reputation for hospitality has become a proverb in Peking. Though pressed with business, he found time to talk over my plans, and I can never be sufficiently grateful to him for all his kindness and cordiality. Here also I made the acquaintance of Mr. Carles, a consular officer, who subsequently became my companion in my first trip in the province

of Pe-chi-li, a trip that turned out to be but an introduction to Chinese travel, and the precursor of a much longer and more serious enterprise.

At length the convention was signed; the whole party broke up; ministers, European and Chinese, were to return to Peking, and Chi-Fu was to be left desolate and deserted.

It was admitted by all to be a great concession on the part of the Chinese, that Li-Hung-Chang had come to Chi-Fu, instead of waiting at Tien-Tsin for Sir Thomas Wade to come to him; much wordy warfare had been waged over this first point, and report said that on more than one occasion negociations were very near being broken off. The ministers left Chi-Fu together, but on the voyage the wily Li-Hung-Chang managed to get his boat ahead of the 'Vigilant' carrying Sir Thomas Wade, and so saved much of his reputation in the minds of his countrymen, as he was the first to land in Tien-Tsin.

September 15.—The steamers here have no regular hours of departure, but discharge or take in cargo immediately on their arrival, and start again as soon as ready. I was told that the vessel that was to take me to Tien-Tsin would probably come in during the night, and get away again very early in the morning. I was therefore ready soon after 6 A.M., and spent the morning watching for the steamer. Her smoke at last appeared on the horizon at about 1.30 P.M., and she dropped anchor at about 3 P.M. Taking a boat from the beach in front of the hotel, I went on board the 'Chih-li,' an American vessel of about 1,200 tons, with the saloon and first-class sleeping accommodation forward.

I now had an excellent view of all the ceremonies and displays attendant on the departure of the great

Li-Hung-Chang, one of the most powerful men in China.

Li rode in a covered sedan chair, preceded by a man carrying an immense red umbrella; his escort appeared to number about forty men, picturesque fellows in blue coats and red trousers, armed with rifles, and besides these there were some wonderful-looking men with cutlasses. The commander of the escort was a most unsoldier-like and ragged-looking person, perched on a Chinese saddle, high above the back of an exceedingly small and abject pony.

A battalion of infantry was drawn up near the landing-jetty, and about forty war-junks were anchored in a triple line close by; these most picturesque and old-fashioned vessels were armed with one gun each, and gaily decorated with an immense red flag, some of them having a second banner striped red and white.

The Chinese steam-gunboats in the harbour were all 'dressed,' as was the Chinese merchant steamer by which Li-Hung-Chang travelled.

When Li-Hung-Chang arrived at the quay, the battalion fired a *feu de joie*, the Chinese steam-gunboats saluted, and the war-junks all let off their pieces somewhat promiscuously.

Li stepped into a cutter which was towed by a very small steam-launch in command of Europeans, and was soon alongside his vessel. The soldiers then on board fired a *feu de joie*, the whistle gave a few screeches, the anchor was up, and away went Li, escorted by the steam-gunboats.

The 'Vigilant' followed almost immediately, the soldiers marched home, the booming of the cannon ceased, the smoke cleared off, and as the sun descended in the western horizon, Chi-Fu, so lately the scene of such busy and hot arguments, so nearly the site of

diplomatic rupture between England and China, seemed to throw off the garb of war, and smiling pleasantly after the departing grandees, to wrap itself in the mantle of that peace that it had just given to the world.

September 15.—At half-past six our anchor was weighed, and as the stars came out we steamed across the Gulf of Pe-chi-li.

This was a very comfortable steamer. The captain, two officers, and two engineers were American, and, with the exception of two Malay quartermasters, the crew were all Chinese. The captain said that he preferred the Chinese as hands to Europeans or Americans: they never give any trouble, never drink or quarrel, and although in cases of danger he admitted that at first they sometimes slightly lost their heads, yet he declared that, with proper leaders, this lasted a very short time, that then they really had no fear, and would work as quietly and as well as under the most ordinary circumstances. The captain is not without experience, as on one occasion he ran on to a rock in this vessel, and the ship was in so critical a position, that at one time they almost lost all hope of saving her.

It is not gratifying to our western pride to find that, in almost all walks of life, the Chinaman can compete with and beat the European, surpassing him in industry, sobriety, and carefulness of living. The problem of the future intercourse of Europe and China is a difficult one, and must furnish much food for reflection to thoughtful minds.

The party was a very pleasant one, when we sat down to dinner at seven o'clock. The American minister and his wife were on board, and perhaps it was in their honour that a remarkably good table was kept during the short voyage. The Americans are almost

as celebrated as the Scotch for their cakes and bread, and in the morning the table groaned beneath the weight of the different descriptions made of wheat and Indian corn.

As we approached the Taku Bar, it became an exciting question whether we should be able to cross it or not. When we left Chi-Fu we drew fourteen feet, but the captain had shifted the cargo so that now we drew only thirteen. It was, however, questionable whether we should find a pilot, as so many ships had preceded us; we fortunately secured the services of the last, and between 1 and 2 P.M., crossed the bar, with many a bump on the soft mud.

The entrance to the Pei-Ho, or River of the North, with its wide expanse of mud flats, would certainly come up to any preconceived expectations of dreariness; but as Tien-Tsin is approached, although the country is still perfectly flat, the life, activity, and close cultivation around render the scenery, to say the least, cheerful.

Of any possible combination of annoying circumstances, the navigation of the Pei-Ho must be the most trying to the temper of a ship captain. The river bends and winds about in the most exasperating manner with the sharpest turns; after a straight run of perhaps a little less than a quarter of a mile, it becomes necessary to round a sharp bend of at least a semicircle; if the bend is to the left, the bow of the ship is aimed straight at the bank on the starboard hand. All may seem to be going well, when the current probably catches the vessel, and with the helm hard a-starboard, she runs hard and fast aground on the bank, in such a way that a pebble could be dropped ashore from the deck. The ship then sticks, and will not move; a warp is laid out to the bank on the other

side of the river, and the donkey engine set to work. Perhaps the strain is too great, and the warp parts; this has to be replaced; the engines then are backed, the helm put amidships, the donkey engine set to work again, the helm put hard a-starboard, and at last her head is got round; she moves again and reaches the next bend, when just at the critical moment a junk steers between the steamer and the shore. The engines must be backed to prevent the junk being jammed between the ship and the bank, and in three minutes as much ground is lost as has been gained in the last half-hour. Now the steamer touches a bank in the middle of the river: the current running like a mill-race slews her round, right across the stream, and stops all navigation. Under these circumstances the captain seemed to me to exhaust the whole of his nautical vocabulary. Once we pulled the warping-post out of the bank; once, in passing a great junk, whose anchor was laid out in a millet field, our wash was so strong that, taking her broadside on, she tore her anchor adrift and went afloat on her own account. Under similar circumstances the swearing of English sailors would have been terrible, but the worthy Chinese seemed to take it in the day's work, and, laughing all the time, quietly laid their anchor out afresh, although I must admit that I subsequently found the swearing powers of the Chinese sailors to be in no way inferior to the capabilities of our troops in Flanders. Until seven o'clock in the evening our captain struggled manfully with the twists and turns, when at last we ran so hard aground that with a falling tide no more could be done that night.

The captain must have been possessed of an angelic temper: he never said a single word except to give his orders in a quiet voice, but at the most aggravating

moments, when most people would have used bad language, he would violently chew the end of his cigar, and by this means relieve his feelings.

The yellow Pei-Ho winds its tortuous course through a perfectly flat plain, and, as far as eye can see, there is not the smallest elevation. The whole country is closely cultivated, chiefly with millet, which now nearly ripe, stands about five feet high; villages are close together, the huts of mud with tiled roofs, and the streets as narrow as possible, whilst round the houses a few green willow trees look homely and pleasant. In the gardens a peculiar kind of yam grows abundantly; the root, which is the esculent portion, is like a large horse-radish in appearance, it has a leaf like a convolvulus, and is trained up on crossed sticks to a height of about six feet. The leaves twine over these in a thick mat of dense foliage that contrasts pleasantly with the yellowish tinge of the ripe millet.

Every now and then passing a village close to the banks, where little brown children with their incipient plaits on each side of the head, and no clothing to speak of, would be playing in the dirt with the family pigs, our wash rolling up would give them all a muddy and unexpected bath.

September 17.—We all retired early, and it was well for us that we did so; for at about four o'clock next morning the donkey engine began to work. There was no more sleep for any one, and as we lay awake we could hear the captain's continued commands—starboard, port a little, &c. &c., and the same heart-breaking process was continued as we worked slowly up.

The morning broke, giving hopes of a lovely day, that were by no means belied, and at eight o'clock we thought that we should breakfast at Tien-Tsin. There

was only one more bend in the river, but that a very difficult one, and it seemed as if the vessel's head never would come round. No sooner had she come up half a point than she would viciously shoot forward a few yards, an eddy would suddenly take hold of her bow, and she would fly right off; at last, a tug coming down the river gave us a friendly pull, and we were safely round the last point. The command was given, full speed ahead—Tien-Tsin was but two miles off. The captain threw away the end of his cigar, and for the first time did not light another. We all began to prepare for going ashore, as the ship sped gaily on up the straight reach, when suddenly she ran on to a bank in the middle of the river, and as the tide had now fallen too low, all the captain's efforts to get her off were unavailing. We descended to breakfast at nine o'clock, and afterwards, as the distance was so short, most of us went off in a boat to the bank, where landing in the mud was a matter of some difficulty. It was accomplished, however, with nothing worse than muddy shoes, and we walked to the British Consulate.

The journey from Tien-Tsin to Peking, of a minister who is taking as his guests two admirals with their suites, is a very serious matter; and I thought to myself that the British Legation must be a very elastic building, to accommodate so many; but where a minister is of such a royally hospitable nature as Sir Thomas Wade, difficulties soon disappear.

Sir Thomas and some of his guests were going by boat to Tung-Chou, whence a short ride would land them in the Legation. These river boats are long, flat-bottomed affairs, with houses on the stern, which a good travelling servant knows how to make fairly comfortable in a very short time. In cold weather the chinks

must be covered with paper, but at this season it was unnecessary. One boat is usually kept as kitchen and dining-room, and at stated hours the different boats come together for meals. The vessels are mostly tracked against the stream by ropes made fast to the head of the mast which is right in the bows, but if there is a fresh fair wind, they sail. In this manner the journey to Tung-Chou occupies from three to four days.

As the river winds and twists about in the flat alluvial plain, and the boats, especially when tracking, do not travel very fast, it is easy to get out and walk along the bank, and by cutting off corners, keep up with the fleet. Thus the tedium of being confined in a very limited area is relieved, and as in September the weather is neither hot nor cold, the journey this way is far from unpleasant.

Another method of travelling is with carts, which perform the journey from Tien-Tsin to Peking in two days, unless the traveller prefers making three shorter stages; but the jolting and bumping of these springless carts over the rough tracks cannot be imagined by those who have never travelled but in carriages with springs over the made roads in England, and is really so unpleasant, that this system would hardly commend itself to any one who was not a very good walker, and by using his legs, could save his bones from being sorely bruised. The Chinese travel a great deal in this manner, and the Chinese ladies sit cramped and cooped up all day long with wonderful patience and endurance. European ladies, too, sometimes make long journeys in these carts; and though, perhaps, accustomed to all the luxuries of Western civilisation, put up with the discomfort attendant on a journey of this kind with a pluck that is delightful to witness.

The Peking carts are without exception the most admirably suited to their work of any I have ever seen. Springs, such as those made in Vienna to do duty over the Roumanian cross-roads, might possibly last over one or two journeys from Peking to Tien-Tsin; but it would be a rash experiment, for once broken it would be difficult, if not impossible, to get them repaired. The carts of Northern China therefore are made without springs; considering their very great strength, they are marvels of lightness, and the workmanship in them is really excellent. A hood, provided with a little window at each side, covers them, and sometimes in hot weather there is an awning in front to protect the driver, or keep the morning and evening sun from penetrating into the inside.

One mule is generally put into the shafts and another as leader; the traces of the latter are both attached to the offside of the body of the cart, passing through a steel ring six inches in diameter fastened near the end of the off shaft. This ring is always polished up in a way that would refresh the heart of a captain of field artillery, and the carters keep their equipment altogether in first-rate order; the reins are generally of rope, very light—indeed, in China the lightness of the harness, in which strength and durability are quite sufficiently considered, is a remarkable contrast to the heavy and useless leather-work with which we in England load our horses.

One hundred *li*, or thirty-three miles, is considered an average day's journey, and when sufficient inducement is held out to the carters, the way in which their carts will day after day complete these long stages over the most trying roads,—sometimes deep in mud, at others through heavy sand, or in the mountains up and down severe and rocky gradients, where

the ground is often strewn with huge stones and boulders,—is very startling to anyone who has been accustomed to the slow and short marches of carts in India.[1]

The mules of Northern China are excellent, and are well looked after and fed by their owners. On one occasion, when we were travelling in Mongolia, Carles went out to ask our carter some question, when he turned round reproachfully and said, 'Don't you see that I am now attending to my mules? That is a very serious matter and I cannot be interrupted.' It must not be supposed that this was impertinence. This carter was one of the very best Chinamen I ever had anything to do with,—always cheery, contented, and respectful.

But by far the most pleasant way of travelling in China is on horseback,—one pony will do the journey from Tien-Tsin to Peking in two days,—and I at once made up my mind that I would ride.

The ponies in Northern China, stout, hardy little animals, come from the Mongolian plateau. Much has been written and said of the excellence and endurance of these animals, but while not denying their many good qualities, I must admit that I was somewhat disappointed with them, and in no way do they come up to the wiry little creatures that are sometimes found in Persia. Of these last I remember one especially that was bought out of the stable of a post-station not far from Teheran; that pony carried a rather heavy servant for many days in succession, and for very long marches, the last three of which were forty miles, forty miles, and seventy miles. For the last ten miles of the last

[1] Richthofen states that the journey from Si-Ngan-Fu to Ili (Kuldja), 2,673 miles, is performed as a matter of course by two mulecarts, carrying three and a half tons, in eighty stages, though practically more than eighty days are required for the journey.

march we cantered nearly the whole distance, and when about a mile from our destination, recognising the place where he had been some months before, the pony took the bit into his teeth and fairly ran away with our man, who was unable to stop him until he arrived close to the old camping-ground. The Mongols until quite lately have never taken the least care in breeding their ponies, but since pony-racing has become so universal at all the treaty ports, and such very large sums of money have been given, especially at Shanghai, for good animals, they have begun to make a certain selection in their ponies for the stud, and the breed is already showing signs of improvement.

The Mongol ponies are generally very vicious, the result, in all probability, of ill-treatment when they are young; they will nearly always try to kick or bite anything or anybody that comes near them, and in this are a very remarkable contrast to the Tibetan ponies, which are the most perfectly docile creatures imaginable.

It was a long business, getting everything ready for the large party of the minister, admirals, and suites. All the luggage was in the Chih-Li, hard and fast on a mud bank, two miles down the river. Somebody had to find a steam-launch and go down after it; boats were to be hired, provisions bought, and all sorts of arrangements to be made; but nevertheless, some of my newly made friends found time to come and help me in my affairs. I had now to discover a servant and to buy ponies.

The word 'boy,' as applied to a servant, has been transplanted with curry and rice, punkahs, compounds, godowns, and tiffins into China, and the word 'servant' is scarcely ever used amongst Europeans at the Treaty Ports.

A 'boy' had been sent down from Peking for Mr. ——, who had just arrived from England to join the British Legation; but at Chi-Fu Mr. —— had picked up a treasure, and now Chin-Tai, for such was the boy's name, found that there was no master for him. I learned long afterwards that he already had an English master at Peking, and that he had come down here on his own account, thinking that service in the Legation would pay better than any engagement beyond its walls. I did not know this at the time, and at once proposed that he should be my boy; he was however very loth to give up the idea of joining the Legation, and at first would have nothing to say to me. At last I told him that if a vacancy occurred, I would at any time give him leave to step into it, and so, with a wistful glance at Mr. ——, he eventually smiled, and with a nod consented to become my property.

This matter being satisfactorily accomplished, I found that there were several besides myself who wanted to buy ponies, so we made up a party to visit the dealers' yards.

Carles had come up in the 'Vigilant' the night before, and had prevailed upon a pony dealer to send a large assortment of what he considered magnificent animals to the compound of a certain European doctor of sporting proclivities. Thither we wended our way, and on arrival found two most sorry-looking steeds. One especially excited our commiseration: a grey pony with a shoulder rather worse than straight, and a huge and inexplicable lump on his withers, whilst his hind quarters sloped away like an alpine hill-side. Standing in what was to him a natural position, he seemed to get his hind feet somewhere under the middle of his back, and a very hairy Roman nose completed the sum of his beauties. Horse-dealing is for some reason

or another a mysterious process all over the world, and the exhibition of animals that combine in a remarkable degree every bad point seems to be the invariable prelude, in Eastern countries, at all events, to more serious business; so, regarding as a necessary part of the performance the examination of this extraordinary animal, which could have been kept for no other purpose than to serve as a foil for other ponies, we went to another yard, where there were seven or eight passable animals. The day was yet young, and there was a third dealer in Tien-Tsin; so promising to call again, we walked on to the last place. Here we found one really very good pony, and three or four shocking bad ones. The proprietor of the place said that the good one had just been sold for forty dollars, but he thought he could get it back for forty-five dollars if we could wait till to-morrow, and that he also had another much finer and more beautiful animal.

I was the only one of the party who was not leaving that evening; so I said I would look in the next day, and returning to the second dealer, two ponies were eventually bought for forty dollars each, after the amount of mysterious bargaining usual in all countries.

Horse-dealing was thus over for the day, and on coming back to the Consulate we found that everything was settled for the boat party, who departed almost immediately, and left the consulate in its ordinary quiet state.

There were two hotels in Tien-Tsin, one kept by a European, and the other by a Chinaman in the European style, where everything was fairly comfortable. I had been advised to choose the latter; so taking Chin-Tai with me, I walked out to see if the

'Chih-Li' had yet got off the mud bank, and if so to get my things up to the hotel. This happy consummation had not yet arrived, and so I took a stroll on Tien-Tsin bund,—for, as in India, the wharf is called the bund.[2]

Tien-Tsin is a very lively place at this time of year. There are always some half-dozen steamers lying alongside the wharf, taking in or discharging cargo. Underneath the trees, which are planted in a row along it, sit numerous vendors of eatables, fruits, cakes, bits of meat, &c. &c. Of these the piemen seem to play the most important rôle; they have in their baskets all sorts of pastry, cakes, and sweet things, and in their hands a cylindrical wooden box, seven inches long, open at one end, in which there are some twenty or thirty sticks. All day long these fellows are here, shouting out 'Pies for sale! Who will buy delicious tarts? Come and buy! buy! buy!' and at every shout they rattle the sticks in the box, until up comes Simple Simon. The box is then shaken again, and he draws a stick: if he draws a lucky one, he gets a pie for nothing; if he is unfortunate in his choice, he has to pay his penny and go empty away.

The fruitsellers sell grapes, apples, pears, peaches, and melons cut up in slices. The grapes in the north of China are delicious, are bought for almost nothing, and are in season for nine months in the year. The Chinese have some method unknown to Europeans, of keeping grapes, by which they will retain their bloom for months after they have been gathered. It seems that they bury them in the ground; but whether they wish to keep the method a secret, or whether it is so simple that no one has taken the trouble to find it out, I cannot say; and notwithstanding constant inquiries that I made of Europeans and of my boy

[2] In India the wharf would be, not *bund*, but *bunder*. (Y.)

Chin-Tai, I never succeeded in satisfying myself about it.

The meat-sellers have a small portable stove, and sell little bits of cooked beef, mutton, sausage, pork, soups, and all sorts of food: delicious and savoury to a Chinaman, but revolting to a foreigner fresh from Europe.

Then there are the fish-sellers, who seem to do a thriving trade in fish, some the size of whitebait, others weighing ten or a dozen pounds.

Hundreds of coolies are aways bustling about with a stick, generally a split bamboo, six feet long, over their shoulder; from each end of this is suspended by cords or chains, a bucket or basket, that comes down to within a couple of feet from the ground, and in which they carry their loads.

There are numbers of ponies to be hired on the wharf, and on these the British sailors gallop wildly up and down the streets in the English settlement. Furious riding is as strictly prohibited here as it is in Rotten Row, but the prohibition is not quite so severely enforced. A couple of tars, just in harbour after a long sea voyage, will step ashore, and hiring each a pony, without stopping to critically examine the animals or their saddlery, will jump up and go off at full gallop, the proprietor sometimes running behind. Jack has probably no socks, and only a pair of shoes, so that the stirrup-iron catches his bare instep; but of this he takes little notice, nor of his trousers, which ruck up a long way above his knees. All goes well until the pony comes to a familiar corner, where, notwithstanding that Jack puts his helm hard a-port, the pony turns sharp round to the left, Jack falls overboard, the pony gives one kick of its heels and gallops off to its home. Not in the least disconcerted, Jack jumps

up behind his mate, who, on seeing the accident, has brought up all standing, and away they go again until the second pony manages to relieve itself of its double burden.

I was told that before a winter at Tien-Tsin was over, the sailors who had been here all the time became wonderful riders, and would go gallantly across country, taking the ditches with wild delight; and one of the features in the Tien-Tsin races is a race for sailors. Wherever you find him, the Englishman of course is nothing without his club, and at most of the treaty ports of China a club of some sort has been established. Tien-Tsin is no exception; and here the merchants and consular officers usually meet of an evening to play a game of billiards, have a chat, or read the paper before dinner, and in connection with this club a story is told very creditable to the character of the Chinese.

The Chinese burn really excellent bricks, but at Tien-Tsin they appear to build their walls without any 'bond,' using for mortar nothing but mud with just a little patch of lime on one or two points of each brick; not because lime is expensive, but because, they say, more lime would spoil the mortar.

The Tien-Tsin club was built on this remarkable system, and it can hardly be a matter for surprise that one rainy day it completely collapsed. At the time there were no foreigners about. The headman in charge, a Chinaman, saw the first crack appear in the ceiling, and although fully comprehending the catastrophe that was about to follow, boldly led the way for the other servants, and with them removed as much as they could of the furniture, notwithstanding the pieces of plaster from the ceiling that were falling about them all the time. It was not until the walls

began to crack that they finally retreated from the building, which in its collapse crushed four of these servants, killing one on the spot. It must be admitted that this is a very remarkable instance of courage and devotion to duty.

At last, at about 6.30 in the evening, the 'Chih-Li' succeeded in getting off the mud bank and reaching the wharf; so taking Chin-Tai on board, I pointed out my innumerable packages to him, and let him bring them to my rooms.

After a pleasant dinner with the acting consul, I returned to the hotel and prepared for bed. I remember reading in the 'Times' some bitter complaints from travellers in Switzerland of the noises made in Alpine hotels by British tourists starting early in the morning on a mountaineering expedition. I also have suffered somewhat from that cause; but of all awful disturbances I ever heard, the worst was made here by a nautical person in a room divided from mine by only a very thin partition. Just as I was getting to bed—it was about midnight—he began shouting for his boy in the tone of voice he would use to his maintopman in a gale of wind. The boy at first took no notice; but the sonorous tones of that seafaring man grew louder and louder, until it seemed as if the vibrations must bring down the house, and even the boy was unable any longer to pretend he did not hear it. He then gave an order to be called at four o'clock, and immediately afterwards began to snore almost as loudly as he had previously shouted.

I seemed scarcely to have closed my eyes, when a terrible clattering in the passage was followed by the invasion of my room by a being, who from the depth of his stomach evolved some fearful sounds, and made me painfully aware that the coolie whose business it

was to awaken the sleepers had mistaken my room for that of my neighbour. On hearing a growl from me he fled precipitately, and immediately afterwards the skipper began making as much noise in getting under way, as he had in bringing himself to moorings; and as almost at the same time the people on the bund outside the windows were getting astir, there was no more sleep to be had; so jumping up, I commenced to rearrange my portmanteaus, which, before starting on a fresh journey, required a thorough overhauling.

The floor of the room was soon strewn with a medley of revolvers, Worcester sauce, prismatic compasses, books, clothes, Liebig's extract, musical boxes, pen-knives, carbolic acid, candles, compressed vegetables, lucifer matches, hats, and a collection of articles from which it was necessary to make a selection suited to the campaign immediately before me. Fortunately for myself, I had given the subject some consideration during the last few days, and when Chin-Tai appeared with my early tea, I was able to sit in a chair and direct the operations, making at the time careful lists of where everything was stowed: a method I strongly recommend to any one who is going to undertake a long journey; for I know of nothing more heart-breaking than the search through perhaps half a-dozen or more boxes for some small article that seems always to escape into the very last corner of the very last package that has to be examined.

This being finished, I went out to get some money. I found that the letter of credit I had provided myself with was more useful than circular notes would have been. It is not only in China that I have found this to be the case, and I mention it for the benefit of any who may be contemplating an expedition into out-of-the-way places. The money current here, as at

Shanghai, is the American dollar ; it is somewhat surprising that the use of a coin of fixed value has as yet penetrated so short a distance beyond the treaty ports, more especially as bank-notes are an ancient institution in China. A very few miles from the main road between Peking and Tien-Tsin, the dollar is of no use whatever, and recourse must be had to the cumbersome method of weighing out lumps of silver. For small change, the brass *cash* are universal : these are round coins with a square hole in the middle ; there are some Chinese characters on them, and they vary in value from about one-tenth to one-fifteenth of an English penny, according to the exchange.

The next thing I had to do was to discover, and secure if possible, my guns and cartridges. Before leaving England I had been led to believe that almost wherever I went in China I should find birds and beasts of every description only waiting to be shot at, and I had provided myself with cartridges and fire-arms in proportion. These had been despatched by an agent in London direct to Tien-Tsin, but where they were I had as yet no conception ; so I made the tour of all the foreign 'Hongs,' as the Europeans call their business establishments in China, and eventually found that my artillery was in the Custom House, where it had caused much speculation.

At all the Treaty Ports the higher Custom House officials are foreigners (mostly Englishmen) in the pay of the Chinese Government, and thus, as a rule, a European traveller has no difficulty about clearing his goods. In this case, however, a number of cases, contents unknown, and consigned to nobody in particular, had suddenly arrived for an unknown person. They naturally drifted to the Custom House, where, as naturally, they were opened by inquisitive

Chinese, who suddenly discovered a very remarkable amount of gunpowder. This at once conjured up in the minds of the Chinese officials all sorts of fearful plots against the Imperial Government; an embargo was laid on the goods, and when at last I appeared to claim my property, I was introduced to a very polite French gentleman, who lectured me severely on the wickedness of which I had been guilty in sending out guns and cartridges without consigning them to some proper person; but who, at the same time, comforted me with the assurance that they would in all probability be handed over to me in the course of a few months.

September 19.—I was early awakened by the awful noises of the steamers in the Tien-Tsin river, and spent the day in making the final preparations for my first journey in China. Thanks to the acting English consul, I rescued my cartridges from the Customs without much difficulty, and then went to find out if the pony that I had already seen was to be purchased. As the owner refused to part with him, I had to look about again, and eventually I bought a strong, white, rather coarse, underbred-looking animal, thirteen hands high, with a tail reaching to the ground, a thick hogged mane, and a very long coat.

I had not as yet provided myself with a Ma-Fu (or horse-boy), so the pony, turning up at the hotel in the course of the afternoon, was casually tied to a clothes-line, until some one could be found to look after him. Chin-Tai was now called upon to produce that necessary article, and he persuaded one of the men who let out ponies on the bund to come with me, and to bring an animal from his own stud with him.

So at last all arrangements were complete, and after a final dinner at the Consulate, I turned into bed ready for my first experiment in Chinese travelling.

CHAPTER II.

'CHINA'S STUPENDOUS MOUND.'

Departure from Tien-Tsin—Rural Characteristics—Pictures by the Way—Chinese Hostelry—The 'Kang'—Long First Day's Ride—Early astir—Approach to Peking—A Fair going on—The British Legation—Visit to the Temple of Heaven—Money Arrangements and Currency Difficulties—Carts or Mules?—The Latter and their Packs—Bread in China—Chinese Lamps and Candles—Items of Travelling Stock—Visit to Prince Kung—Chinese Whim of picking Melon-seeds—The Journey commenced—The Difficulties of a Name—The Pei-Ho crossed—Picturesque Villages—Incidents by the Way—City of Chi-Chou—Tombs of the Manchu Emperors—The Great Wall first seen—Profusion of Fruit—The Day's Routine—Frank Curiosity of People—Roadside Pictures—Pass of Hsi-Feng K'ou—Village Inn at Po-Lo-Tai—Bean-curd, what it is—Oak-leaf Silk—Millet—Pa-K'ou Ting—Exaggerated Ideas of Chinese Population—Foreigners as seen by Chinese Eyes—Journey to Jehol abandoned—Chinese Encroachment on the Mongols—Halt to Rest—Ta-Tzŭ-K'ou—Ideas of a Lion—Splendid Autumn Climate—Palisade Barrier of Maps non-existent—Stentorian Commandant—Smoking in China—Lovely Sunset Scene—The Inn at Sun-Cha—Impressions of the Great Wall—The Sea in Sight—Shan-Hai Kuan.

September 20.—After an early cup of tea we started at six o'clock. The Ma-Fu rode in front on a very good iron-grey pony, in shape and size something like my own. The Ma-Fu had nothing on his head but his plait; he wore a loose blue coat padded with cotton wool, and loose blue cotton trousers, and he rode on a Chinese-made English saddle. I rode next on a saddle that I had brought with me from England, with large flax-cloth saddle-bags and leather wallets. These saddle-bags proved excellent, and if my experience is worth anything, good flax-cloth saddle-

bags will last quite as long as any traveller can need; they are much more convenient and far lighter than leather ones, which latter become very awkward in rainy weather, but the seams should be lined inside with a strip of leather half an inch wide.

At this season of the year in Northern China the sun has lost its power, and a helmet is not necessary. A white English felt hat, Norfolk jacket, breeches and gaiters, completed my costume.

My three baggage-carts came next, in one of which Chin-Tai reposed as comfortably as circumstances would permit.

It was a dull, grey morning as we started from the hotel, and marched through the Chinese city of Tien-Tsin. Here the roads are of clay without any paving, and about fifteen feet wide; the houses are also built of clay, and in the main street, through which we rode, nearly all of them were shops. These have no upper story, are always quite open in front, and there is an occasional peep through them into a back yard. There is generally hanging outside the shops a gaily painted sign-board, on which the nature of goods on sale within is written. A bit of matting is sometimes stretched half across the street, as an awning for a shop front, and the street is here and there entirely roofed in with matting supported on poles stretching from side to side.

It was a matter of some difficulty to force our way through the crowds of people. Coolies were carrying fish in buckets or baskets, others with baskets of fruit, or huge bundles of long reed grass, millet, or Indian corn stalks; everybody was shouting, pushing, and in a hurry, and carts lumbering along often blocked the way entirely, but the people seemed rather to like this, as it gave them an opportunity of stopping for a gossip. The most unpleasant people

to meet were the coolies carrying buckets of liquid manure, nor did they assist to sweeten the air, which in Tien-Tsin, as generally in Chinese towns, reeks with abominable smells of every description. In all the bustle and hubbub pariah dogs ran about doing scavengers' work, assisted by the pigs, which persistently placed themselves under the legs of the ponies or mules.

At length we were clear of the town, and breathed the fresh country air. The Ma-Fu, who knew nearly twenty words of English, took me under his care, and leaving the carts to find their slow way behind us, we rode on ahead.

The country here is quite flat, without an elevation of the smallest description, except the houses and river embankment. Behind the latter, masts and sails of hundreds of junks can be seen. Every inch of the ground is cultivated with millet or Indian corn, and in the fields there is often an undercrop of sweet potato or a small bean.

There are often cotton and castor oil plants bordering the edges of the fields, but the great feature is always the millet, standing about eight feet high, with reddish brown or yellow stalks.

In the immediate neighbourhood of Tien-Tsin there are not many trees, but a little further into the country the villages have more trees about them, almost entirely willows and Chinese date trees. These latter (in reality the *Rhamnus Theezans*, a kind of buckthorn or jujube, in no way whatever allied to the date palm) bear a fruit in appearance and taste very like a small date ; the tree itself is more like an olive than anything else, and is very common in Northern Persia about the neighbourhood of Sharood.

A few miles on, the road skirts large plantations

of willows, and the landscape is very like the scenes in some of the pictures of Karl du Jardin. In the Dresden Gallery there is rather a stiff picture by this artist of a grove of trees, with a herd of swine underneath. Now, not far from Tien-Tsin, this landscape is reproduced almost exactly; there is the identical row of willow-trees in a perfectly straight line, and all of precisely the same height; and as I passed, the very same herd of swine was feeding underneath: the only thing wanting to make it complete was the gay cavalier out hunting.

Round the villages there are always gardens with little square patches of lettuces, cabbages, turnips, and yams trained on sticks like convolvuli, all models of neatness and regularity.

Another great feature is the threshing-ground, where at this season men and women are busy threshing out the corn on a flat floor of puddled mud, in appearance and size very like an open skating rink. The brown mud colour of the houses against a background of willow trees, the rich brown stalks of the Indian corn, merging into a madder red, and mingled with the green and yellow undercrop of beans, and the sober blue of the people's clothes, as they sit round the floor, combine to give a charm even to this generally uninteresting plain.

The women often pretend to be afraid of a foreigner, and run away when they see one coming; and notwithstanding their deformed feet, they seem to waddle about very comfortably, though their gait is remarkably awkward.

After a ride of about twenty miles I arrived with the Ma-Fu at Yang-Tsun, the first halting place, and here for the first time I made acquaintance with the luxuries of a Chinese inn.

Riding through an archway, with a room on each side used as a sort of restaurant, there is an open court-yard; on one side of it there is what in England would be called a long, low hut, divided into several rooms: these are the sleeping apartments of the guests at the hotel; on the other side a large open shed is the stable or feeding-place for the horses and mules.

At the farther end of the yard is a grand room, with a smaller one leading from it on each side: this is only awarded to guests of distinction, or in other words to those who can afford to pay.

Knowing nothing of the arrangements, I went, where I was shown, into one of the little rooms at the side, about ten or eleven feet square, and the same in height, the floor of brick and the walls of mud. Dirty paper, with many holes in it, pasted over the rafters formed the ceiling, and some wooden lattice-work, covered with dirty paper, full of holes, did duty for a window.

The great feature in every room in every inn in Northern China is the *kang*. This is a hollow raised dais, about eighteen inches high, covering half the floor, over which there is usually laid a bit of thin straw matting, the home of innumerable fleas; in the winter a fire is lighted under this, and through the bricks or mud of which it is built a pleasing warmth is imparted to the traveller, who, rolled up in his blanket, lies on it to sleep.

During the daytime a little table about nine inches high stands on the kang; a person sitting on the latter can just make use of this by twisting himself round into an impossible attitude, which after any length of time eventuates in aches all over the back. There may be in addition a broken-down and exceed-

ingly filthy table and arm chair, about the height of ordinary European articles. The chair very clumsy, heavy, stiff, straight-backed, and uncomfortable, with legs which, thrust out in a sprawling fashion, seem to have the most unhappy knack of being always in the way; and the table with a ledge underneath just where an ordinary person wants to put his knees, and a bar below to interfere with the free movements of his feet. Such is the accommodation and such the furniture a traveller invariably meets with in the inns of China. In the course of an hour my carts appeared; Chin-Tai was sorely indignant with the innkeeper for not having put me into the place of honour, and his contempt for a Ma-Fu who could care so little for his master's dignity was delightful to witness.

After six weeks on board ship a ride of forty miles appeared rather long, and as the evening drew in I began to make inquiries about the distance. The Ma-Fu, holding up six fingers, said it was now only six li, or two miles,—but that mile and a bittock! no matter whether it is a li as in China, a cos as in India, or the abominable farsakh of Persia, the weary traveller always finds the 'bittock' much longer than the mile. On this occasion the distance lengthened out, and the Ma-Fu, in answer to my numerous inquiries, sometimes said there were only four li more, sometimes five, once the number was reduced to one, but immediately rose to three. The fact was he did not know the road, and in the dark was wandering about in a state of hopeless confusion. Presently a light appeared in front which turned out to be a lantern hanging from a cart, whose destination was the same as our own; as the light thrown on the road made the work easier for the ponies we kept close behind, and at last at nine o'clock rode into the yard of

the inn at Ho-Se-Wu. With my saddle-bags for a pillow I was soon sound asleep, and did not wake till Chin-Tai appeared with the carts, and said that it was time for dinner.

Chin-Tai early discovered a weakness for cookery that subsequently proved very troublesome ; he never could be brought to understand that something to eat as soon as possible after arrival was better than an elaborate meal in the middle of the night. Once produced, however, my dinner was soon dispatched, the mattress was laid on the kang, and at about midnight I was fairly in bed.

September 21.—The carts were hired only for the journey to Peking, and it was therefore the interest of the driver to get there as soon as possible. The gates of the city are always closed at sundown, and as no power on earth can then get them open till the next morning, there was no fear of the carters starting late. The people of Northern China are all, however, very early, and when after a cup of tea a start was effected at 3.45 a.m. the town was all astir, many of the shops were open, and the furnace of a blacksmith cast a bright glare across the street as the sound of his hammer resounded in the clear morning air.

As long as it was dark it was advisable to ride in the light of the paper lantern dangling behind one of the carts ; but when the dawn appeared the Ma-Fu took me on at a huntsman's jog to the halting place at Chang-Chia-Wan, where, as I sat at my breakfast, a cockroach came out of his residence in a crack in the filthy table to share my repast.

Leaving the carts to follow, we started as soon as the ponies were fed. Riding still over the flat plains the distant blue mountains presently came in sight,

and soon afterwards the unmistakable walls of Peking,[3] with the great high three-storied building over the gate.

The road from Tien-Tsin to Peking runs over a sandy, clayey soil; there is no attempt at a made road, but in dry weather it is very easy for mules and horses, and the latter may be galloped the whole distance (eighty miles); but after rain the track becomes very heavy, the mud is deep, and the work, even for horses with only a light load on their back, is very severe, while for carts it becomes a continual struggle.

To-day there was some sort of fair going on in Peking, and the scene was very remarkable,—quite unlike anything to be seen elsewhere. The street was very wide, and on each side were the same wretched houses that so soon become familiar to the traveller in China. Between them the space was closely covered by the wares that the sellers of goods had spread out on the ground: old clothes, old rags, brushes, baskets, string, rope, eatables, drinks, fruit, crockery, and almost every conceivable article of household equipment, were exhibited for sale; each seller was surrounded by a mob of buyers, their friends, and lookers on. The streets were absolutely thronged with people walking, riding, or in carts; the hubbub and confusion were appalling, and progress at times seemed almost impossible. Pigs and dogs took their usual share in the proceedings, and evil smells were not absent. The inhabitants of Peking, and of all the towns and villages along the road from Tien-Tsin, have seen so many foreigners that a European causes little remark; here they were

[3] In Chinese, Pei-Ching, i.e., the northern capital. So also Nan-Ching (commonly called Nanking), the southern capital.

mostly too busy with their buying and selling to pay much attention to anything else, and with the exception of a few people who must have come in from the country, and who could not help laughing at the comical sight, no one took much heed of the Englishman moving slowly in the motley crowd. We threaded our intricate way through the mazes of this fair for very nearly a mile, when turning out of it into a bye street, a smart canter brought us at 4.45 p.m. to the gate of the British Legation.

The British Legation in Peking stands in grounds sufficiently extensive to contain the Minister's private residence and state reception rooms, chancery, houses for three secretaries, a doctor, and an accountant, quarters for ten students, a church, fives-court, bowling alley, reading-room, and billiard-room.

Two large stone lions guard the entrance to the Minister's house, and passing between these the first building is reached. This is nothing more than an empty antechamber with a garden beyond, where there are a few trees; at the other side of this there is a second antechamber, with a suite of two or three rooms on each side; and, finally, traversing another garden, the door of the Minister's residence is gained.

This was built by a former emperor for his son. There is no upper story, but the rooms are lofty, and beautifully decorated in the Chinese style. This is very different to anything European, and the harmony with which, in the deep dark shadows, a brilliant lapis-lazuli blue will mingle with an emerald green is at first rather startling to an eye educated in the principles of modern high art.

September 22.—During my stay a large party made an excursion to the Temple of Heaven, one of the sights of Peking. After riding through the filthy

streets, in which the smells and the dust impressed one most, we reached the Temple. The grounds are square, and enclosed by walls about half a mile long, where the fresh mown grass is shaded by long straight rows of yews and laburnums. It is one of those places almost impossible to describe, and leaves upon the mind confused ideas of grandeur and utter ruin,—recollections of wonderful blue encaustic tiles, and marble stairs, with rank weeds growing between the slabs,—visions of elegant bridges and rich but broken carvings,—vivid impressions of a general covering of dirt and filth, and the surprise of a patch of kitchen garden in an unexpected corner.

The Emperor comes here at certain times to pray, and on these occasions, after a bullock has been made a burnt-offering, he should pass the night sitting upright in a stiff and straight-backed chair; but the attendants naïvely exhibited the luxurious bed for which his Imperial Majesty vacates the uncomfortable arm-chair, and they had no hesitation in admitting that economy was now strictly carried out, that the flesh of the animal was sold, and nothing burnt but the skin and bones. Familiarity with celestial affairs seems to have bred contempt in the minds of the servants about the place, for they were liberal in their offers of bricks, tiles, or bits of glass, of which tourists are generally so fond. I did not load myself very heavily, and trusted to my memory rather than my pockets to carry away souvenirs of the Temple of Heaven.

Money arrangements had now to be made for the journey we were about to undertake, for dollars do not pass current far from the walls of Peking, or the great high road to Tien-Tsin. In the city of Peking itself the private banks issue notes, but these are worthless half a dozen miles from the capital. Over

nearly the whole of China payment is made by means of a lump of silver weighed in a balance.

The silver is cast into ingots of various sizes, and of two shapes; the largest are something like a shoe in form, and weigh about thirty or forty ounces, the smaller ingots are cast into pieces almost hemispherical, and weigh from one to ten ounces. The silver is of various degrees of purity, but a Chinese banker or merchant, accustomed to transactions in bullion, knows almost instinctively the quality of the metal, and rarely makes a mistake.

Provided with these ingots, the traveller finds his troubles now begin. To make small payments, pieces of silver of a less size are necessary. The ingot is therefore carefully weighed, and sent out to be chopped up by anyone who will undertake the task. The village blacksmith is the usual operator, and when he returns the silver it has to be weighed again, for the owner to satisfy himself that the full amount has been returned. This is, however, but the first of many vexations. Every time a purchase is made, when the price of an article has been finally agreed upon after the amount of bargaining always necessary to complete a transaction, the vendor will generally manage to find some fault with the quality of the silver, and will want an extra payment in consequence.

In travelling about from one city to another there is a further difficulty to be overcome, for every place has its own scale, and what is an ounce in one town will perhaps be less than an ounce in the next, so that the weary traveller, after having, as he thought, finally concluded the tiresome transaction, is quietly told that his scale is not a good one and the silver must all be weighed afresh in a balance of the place. For weighing silver a Roman steelyard, with a bar of ivory

neatly-marked, is usually employed; but bankers or others who have extensive transactions generally use a large pair of scales.

It was some time before I thoroughly understood the mysteries of taels and balances; I was fortunate in having Carles to initiate me, and by his advice Chin-Tai was sent off with some 500 dollars to buy lumps of silver, as well as to look after mules, and get the many odds and ends necessary for a two months' journey. In the meantime another pony was brought for sale, a strong, rough, meek-looking bay with black points, about thirteen hands high.

The owner asked seventy dollars, and thirty-five was promptly offered; he refused that sum and went away, but presently returned with his demand reduced to forty dollars, and ultimately the pony was bought for thirty-eight.

There was a knotty question to be settled whether we should carry our baggage on baggage-mules or in carts. Chin-Tai was very strongly in favour of carts because they were so much less trouble, but Carles' was of opinion (an opinion fully justified by subsequent experience) that carts would be unable to move over the roads by which we intended to travel; ultimately, much to the sorrow of Chin-Tai, we decided for mules. The usual way of hiring mules is definitely from place to place, and as we wanted to depart from the fixed custom and intended to travel about, first in one direction then in another, according to our fancy, our difficulties were considerably increased. There were plenty of muleteers who would have been willing enough to engage themselves to go to any definite point and return, but to go wandering over the country, no one knew whither, was an idea the novelty of which was so startling that very few

muleteers would venture to hazard themselves in the uncertain undertaking; at last, however, one was found who consented to let out his mules for $\frac{6}{10}$ of a tael daily (that is, about 3*s.* 5*d.*). That sum covered all expenses connected with the animals, and provided for a sufficient number of muleteers. The only objection to this arrangement would be that the muleteers might refuse to make the full day's march; this, however, as a fact, they seldom did, indeed not more than muleteers or coolies would have done if hired by distance instead of by day.

The packsaddles of the mules in the north of China are very well adapted for baggage that is to be carried many days in succession, but they are not convenient for travellers who continually want to open their boxes. The saddle is composed of two parts, the saddle or pad, and a framework to which the load is tightly lashed. When all the luggage has been made fast, and everything is ready for a start, then the framework is lifted up by two men, one on each side. The mules, accustomed to the operation, stoop their heads and walk underneath almost of themselves, and the framework is dropped down on to the pad, no other lashing or fastening being required.

The advantages of this system are, first, that if the goods are not unpacked the operation of loading and unloading the mules is a very short one, and secondly, that the burdens need never be put on any of the animals until the moment of starting. The disadvantages are that if the things are required every night the whole business of lashing and unlashing has to be gone through, which is a much longer process than unfastening a package from a mule whose packsaddle is of the ordinary description, all in one piece; and worse than all, these packsaddles very frequently

give the mules sore flanks, for the framework not being fastened to the pad, and being kept in its place chiefly by its shape and balance, is never really steady, and so, in rough countries especially, galls the animal. It is true that with the other system, as the loads are lashed to the saddles themselves, and as it is of course impossible for all the animals to be ready at the same moment, some mules must always be standing with their burdens on their backs some time before the start. Still under all circumstances, and taking everything into consideration, the system, pursued in the north, of the saddle and framework, does not seem to be the best.

We were not going away for more than six weeks, and so our luggage was limited in amount. In the north of China there is always the kang on which to lay a mattress; a bedstead is therefore never required; and as the weather at this season is very temperate, and no rain is to be expected, a quantity of clothes is unnecessary. Chin-Tai at this time was unequal to the task of making bread, and we took a good supply of biscuits as a substitute,—for bread to suit the European taste is not to be found in China.

The Chinese eat very little bread with their food, although in towns and villages there are always a great number of shops and stalls devoted to the sale of various descriptions of bread and cakes; but it is a mistake to say, as has been stated, that the Chinese do not make bread of wheaten flour.

The round dumplings, the sight of which is so familiar to anyone who has been further into China than the European Concession at Shanghai, are made of wheaten flour, and are leavened, but, instead of baking, the Chinese steam them. They are very heavy, and somewhat indigestible, but, when cut into

slices and toasted, are a very fair substitute for European bread.

Light is one of the chief difficulties in China, as the rooms are always carefully arranged to exclude every glimmering of sun. The Chinese themselves seem able to work without any light, the miserable glimmer of a bit of wick hanging over the edge of a bowl of oil being hardly worthy of the name. A dirty bowl is the form of lamp in general use, which is as disgusting as it is inefficient. No one who has not seen a Chinese lamp of this kind can form an idea of the unutterable state of filth in which these lamps invariably are. I never met any person who had ever seen a new one, and these articles of household equipment are apparently handed down as heirlooms from generation to generation, no one venturing to remove the dirt consecrated by antiquity and sacred from ancestral associations, or it may be that the most discerning person would fail to recognise in a new and clean lamp any representative of the extraordinary accumulation of filth to which he had been accustomed.

The Chinese have also what are called wax candles, in which there is a certain amount of wax and a good deal of fat. These candles are moulded with sticks at the bottom, by which they are held or stuck into any convenient crack in the table, but excepting for use in lanterns these are luxuries only enjoyed by the rich. The wicks are very thick, and of course not plaited; the operation of snuffing is always performed by flipping off the wick with the fingers on to the ground.

To a traveller in China, candles are almost as much a necessity as food or drink, for if writing is put off for twenty-four hours, one quarter of the information obtained during the day is forgotten; in

a week half of it has escaped the memory, and after any longer time very little is remembered. To do much writing in a dark and filthy inn by the glow-worm glimmer of a Chinese light is almost hopeless; for after a hard day's work it is always more or less an effort to set to work in the evening, and, when darkness is piled upon discomfort, it requires almost more than human determination to resist the temptation of leaving the writing and turning into bed.

We therefore carried with us an allowance of two good English candles a night, a luxury that can only be appreciated by those who have attempted to do much writing in the dark.

Besides these, we were obliged to take with us tea, salt, sugar, and many other small articles.

Although tea is held to be the universal drink of the Chinese, it is often impossible to procure it in Northern China, and, in the few out-of-the-way places where it is to be bought, it is always very bad. At this long distance from the tea-growing districts, it is a great deal too expensive for any but rich people, and the poorer classes in the north either make a decoction of the leaves of some tree, or drink plain hot water, for, in all the length and breadth of this vast empire, the Chinese universally hold cold water in abhorrence for either external or internal use.

The salt made by the Chinese varies considerably, but in small places, to which the worst articles always seem to gravitate, the salt to be bought in the shops is generally so full of dirt as to be really uneatable.

I had bought in Marseilles a quantity of compressed vegetables in packets, which, with Liebig's extract of meat, make really delicious soup. The space occupied by these is very small, and if enough vegetables for the day's consumption are in the

morning put into a pickle-bottle full of water, and corked up tightly, soup can be prepared in the evening as soon as boiling water can be procured. During all my wanderings I almost invariably had this soup, which is wholesome and nourishing.

Attention to small details of this kind makes the greatest difference in the comfort of a traveller, and it was not until after much consultation and deliberation that it was finally agreed that all necessaries had been provided.

September 25.—The pleasant ring of the mule-bells sounded in the morning, and eight mules arrived to be loaded with our goods. Each load was covered with a square of oiled cotton waterproofing, and our two servants arranged a quantity of wadded quilts on two half-laden mules, thus forming very comfortable seats for themselves. At eleven o'clock they started to await us at Tung-Chou, while we joined the suite of the Minister who went to pay a visit to the Prince of Kung. The Prince received his guests in what in Europe would be called a very poor room, in which there were two round tables and a number of cushioned and uncushioned chairs. Amongst the Chinese the left hand takes precedence of the right, and on the left of the Prince of Kung our Minister of course took his place. Tea was first served round, in small cups, without milk or sugar, then plates and dishes of fresh and preserved fruits, innumerable little cakes, apricot kernels, and water-melon seeds. The taste of the Chinese for water-melon seeds is one of the most extraordinary imaginable. Huc, though not always a safe leader, has made some remarks on this predilection, in his usual humorous style, worth quoting:

'The water-melon is in China a fruit of great importance, above all on account of its seeds, for which

the Chinese are possessed of a veritable passion, or rather of an insatiable appetite. . . . .

'In certain localities, when the harvest of water-melons is abundant, the fruit is without worth, and the proprietor sets no value on it, except for the seeds. Sometimes whole cargoes of them are taken to the most frequented highways, and are given away gratuitously to travellers, on the condition that they will carefully collect the grains for the proprietor. . . . .

'These water-melon seeds are, in fact, a veritable treasure, to amuse at a cheap rate the three hundred millions of inhabitants of the Celestial Empire. In the eighteen provinces these deplorable futilities daily furnish delicacies to the whole population.

'There can be nothing more amusing than to see these astonishing Chinese before their meals dallying with these seeds, trying as it were the good disposition of their stomachs, and gently sharpening their appetites. Their long and pointed nails are, under these circumstances, invaluable. The address and celerity with which they crack the hard and tough shell of the seed in order to extract therefrom one atom of the kernel, or perhaps none at all, ought to be seen;—a troop of squirrels or apes could not be more skilful.

'It has always been our opinion that the natural propensity of the Chinese for all that is factious and deceitful inspires them with this frantic taste for water-melon seeds, for if in the whole world there exists a deceitful food or a fantastic diet, it is incontestably a water-melon seed.

'Moreover, the Chinese give you them in all places and at all times. If a few friends meet together to drink a cup of tea or rice-wine, the necessary

accompaniment is invariably a plate of water-melon seeds. They crack them during journeys, and as they walk about the streets, engaged in business matters. If a child or a workman has a few cash to dispose of, it is on this kind of gluttony that they spend it. They are to be bought everywhere,—in the towns, in the villages, and on every highroad and byway.

'Should one arrive in the most deserted country, absolutely wanting in provisions of any description, one may rest assured of not being reduced so low as to lack water-melon seeds.

'Throughout the whole empire there is an inconceivable consumption of these seeds, and one that exceeds the wildest flight of imagination. On the rivers huge junks may be seen loaded entirely with this precious commodity.

'In truth, one can hardly help fancying oneself amidst a nation of rodents. It would be a curious inquiry, and one well worthy of our great statisticians, to examine how many water-melon seeds must be consumed daily, monthly, or yearly, in a country whose population amounts to three hundred millions.'[4]

Thus Huc; and every step I took in this singular country, and every wayside restaurant at which I stopped, convinced me not only that in this case Huc is guilty of no exaggeration, but that it is utterly impossible to convey to the most imaginative of Europeans the extent of this preposterous fancy.

On this occasion our hosts were not beneath their reputation, and soon the floor was strewn with hundreds of the shells. There were a number of high Chinese officials present, with finger nails of the most astonishing length, some of them at least an inch beyond the

[4] Huc, *L'Empire Chinois*, ii. 47 (ed. 1862).

tip of the finger. They asked all sorts of curious questions about the guests: who they were, what they did when they were at home, whether they were rich or poor, what were their honourable ages, and made many other inquiries that appear inquisitive to Europeans, but are amongst Chinese little more than the polite formulæ of familiar intercourse. These ceremonies occupied so much time that it was five o'clock in the evening before Carles and I were able finally to get away. Putting our horses into a smart canter Peking was soon left behind, and I was fairly embarked in Chinese travel.

The shades of the autumn evening were already beginning to fall as our ponies' hoofs clattered over the great imperial highway from Peking to Shan-Hai-Kuan. This is one of the paved roads of China,—a relic of departed grandeur,—like all else, in a sad state of ruin, with its stones displaced, and full of huge and dangerous holes. The fourteen miles to the gate of Tung-Chou were accomplished in a couple of hours, and though it was long after sunset, Carles had not much difficulty in persuading the warders to unlock and withdraw the heavy bolts. We entered a dark and gloomy street, bounded on each side by high walls, with the narrow garden doors closely shut and fastened. For about a mile we followed the deserted thoroughfare, and then suddenly found ourselves in the busy business quarter. Here the shops were dimly lighted with a bit of flaring candle, or a miserable oil lamp, that cast an uncertain glare on the faces of the dealers and purchasers, and formed many a study that would have delighted Dow or Schalken, or others of those old Dutch painters. Night and day seem all one to these busy Chinese people of the north, and as we rode out of the north gate of the city we left them

still chattering over their bargains, without any thoughts of closing for the night.

After leaving the city we rode through the suburb known as the Barrier Inn to the hotel of 'Virtue and Prosperity,' where we found a very good room with a small chamber at each side; in both of these there was of course the usual kang, on which our beds were already made. The large room was adorned with sundry paintings, in some of which that omnipresent bird, the magpie, was conspicuous.

In this part of China the magpie is a very important feature in a landscape. Fat and tame, these birds walk about the roads, jump into trees, or fly over the houses in parties of eight or ten. Scarcely deigning to get out of the way of the horses' feet, they hop off to one side of the road, and stand looking on with the same impudent air that they have all over the Eastern world.

Another picture represented a willow-tree, with a bridge; and besides these there were scrolls, with inscrutable passages from obscure but revered authors of antiquity.

A cold fresh breeze had set in from the north as we finished our ride, and we were both quite ready to do justice to the excellent dinner that was ready for us.

On counting up our party before going to bed, we found that we numbered thirteen people, viz. Carles and myself, our two servants, one Ma-Fu, and eight muleteers. There were besides four ponies, eight mules, and last, but not least, Carles' liver-and-white spaniel 'Spot.'

September 26.—We were obliged to wait here for our passports, as they were not ready when we left Peking. Before getting a passport in China it is

necessary to be provided with a name,—not a very simple matter there.

The Chinese having no alphabet it is necessary to choose for each syllable some Chinese word that sounds as much like it as possible. As a rule the attempt only ends in failure, and old residents in China usually have a Chinese name of one word, that may or may not approximate in sound to the first syllable of their European name. Whilst waiting, news was brought that the Emperor's brother, who had just returned from a visit to the imperial tombs, wanted to come to the rooms we were occupying; but when he learned that they were in the occupation of foreigners he turned away, so that his eye should not light on any of the hated race. For this man has the reputation of detesting foreigners to such an extent that he would exterminate them if he could; and report has it that the present boy was made emperor, in part for the sake of rendering his ferocious relative innocuous, the near connections of an emperor being unable to hold office.

The hotel-keeper was very thankful to have been spared the visit of the exalted personage, who would have taken much and given little; and when at last the courier from Peking galloped in with our papers, when the mules were loaded and we took our leave, our host was none the less cordial in his adieux, that we had been the means of saving him from the infliction.

Outside the inn a long string of camels laden with tea was on its way to Mongolia. They went off towards the north, and as we rode to the west, the deep sound of the bell these animals wear round their necks was soon lost in the distance. We soon arrived at the Pei-Ho, and as there was no bridge we passed

it in a ferry, a somewhat lengthy operation, as it was necessary to unload all the mules.

This morning I rode the innocent-looking bay pony, who promptly kicked me directly I approached him; and as he shied at everything by the roadside, and ran away when I took a map out of my pocket, I began to fear that his mild and inoffensive appearance might after all be deceptive.

The road was rather heavy in places, and showed signs of recent floods as we travelled over the same flat country as before. The large millet, another smaller millet (the only crop it is said that the locusts spare), and Indian corn were the chief crops, until we arrived at the 'Harmonious and Benevolent Inn' at Yen-Ch'iao.

September 27.—We very soon found out that although the people, when about their own business, are always up and away at all sorts of hours in the morning, they are by no means so anxious for an early start when they are engaged for others, and notwithstanding that we were up at four o'clock, we were unable to get our caravan under way before a quarter to six.

The long and straggling villages in this part of the country are very picturesque; the footpath on either side of the wide main street is well raised, for the roadway evidently becomes a roaring torrent after much rain; the paths are lined with a row of trees, and the cottages behind are built of mud, with cucumbers or pumpkins trailing over them. There are not many people about, either in the fields or in the villages, indeed some of the latter seem almost deserted, until an opening discloses the threshing-floor where nearly all the inhabitants are collected, either threshing the corn or assisting as spectators.

A fresh north-westerly wind came down from the

mountains, and after the long period of tropical heat it felt quite cold in the early morning.

We crossed the Tan-Ho at a ferry, where, although some of the mules objected strongly to entering the boat, we were delayed only twenty minutes. After this 'Spot' disappeared, Carles galloped back after him, and on passing his boy, mounted on the red pony, that amiable animal could not resist a good kick, by which he broke the reins, deposited the boy on the ground, and gained his freedom. By-and-by we met a military official, who, to conceal his curiosity, pretended that it was his duty to stop Chin-Tai and make inquiries about us. After halting for breakfast at the 'Hotel of the Law-makers' in the village of Tsao-Lin, we spent the night in the small, but fairly clean, 'Inn of the Everlasting Harmonies' at Pang-Chün.

In the little country inns large tables and chairs were very rare, and there was usually nothing but the little low table on the kang. Some of these, made of very beautiful wood highly polished, and black with age, were, although very dirty, really handsome pieces of furniture; but sitting to write at them in an unnatural twisted position is not very comfortable after a long day's ride, and there was generally enough work to occupy several hours of an evening.

As we marched through the village before the sun was up, our fingers tingled in the keen air, and seeing a man selling hot sweet potatoes, our party nearly cleared out his stock. After this for some time the hot potato became a regular event in the morning's ride.

September 28.—'Spot' was a source of keen controversy and much speculation amongst the villagers we passed: none of them had ever seen other dogs than

the villanous pariahs that frequent the streets, and do the scavenger's work, the same snarling curs that may be seen in every village in Turkey, Egypt, India, and Persia,—so at the sudden appearance of 'Spot' the wise people of the town would lay their heads together, some saying he was a sheep, others a sort of cow; none ever suspected that he was a dog, and in the universal interest we attracted but a very minor share of notice.

The plain was thickly populated, and the villages and towns were scarcely more than a mile apart; as we proceeded the road gradually approached a fine range of mountains; now stone entered into the composition of the buildings; large boulders, lying about the main streets of the villages, were sure indications of sudden floods in the rainy season; and soon we were near enough to see the Buddhist temples perched on the tops of almost inaccessible crags.

The city of Chi-Chou lay on our road to-day; its walls are massive, in good repair, and flanked with strong towers. The gate is protected by a double barbican, so that an invader, before he can enter, must pass three strong doors. It was market-day as we marched through, and all the sellers were sitting down at the sides of the street with great sacks of grain, chiefly wheat and millet; there was scarcely any rice.

During these marches the red pony was a never failing source of amusement or excitement. Chin-Tai, thinking the back of a pony more comfortable, or more dignified, than a seat on a mule, turned the Ma-Fu off his grey, and took it for himself. The Ma-Fu, a long-suffering person, walked for some time, but getting tired, he rashly attempted to ride the spare animal without a saddle. This was a liberty the red pony would not permit for a moment, and he disposed of

the Ma-Fu no less than three times early in the day. At last, as the pony was more difficult to catch each time that he got loose, and the delays were becoming serious, authority was obliged to interfere: Chin-Tai was replaced on the mule, and the Ma-Fu restored to the saddle on his iron grey.

At Shih-Men the inn was small, but the landlord very civil and attentive; he took an immense fancy to my trousers, and wanted to buy them on the spot. Then all the people of the village came to have a look at us and our things. Very few Chinamen can resist the temptation to feel the texture of European cloth, and as the Chinese are quite ignorant of the method of curing leather, the smoothness of our belts and instrument cases used to excite universal admiration. Fortunately the villages were not large, so that nearly all the inhabitants could come in turn, and feel our clothes and belts.

September 29.—As we were starting this morning, our head muleteer dilated with enthusiasm on the magnificence and comfort of the inns at a place called Ma-Lan-Yu, and to gratify him we consented to make it our halting-place for the night.

Our road still lay over an alluvial plain, and passing through a gap in the hills we entered a basin bounded on the south by a long ridge called the Dragon Hill, and on the north by a fine range whose peaks were about 1,000 feet above us. Away to the back, amongst these mountains, are the imperial tombs, which, according to an informant here, cover a tract of country extending over seventeen mountains. The sacred ground is not enclosed by a wall, but being covered with forests abounding with game and wild beasts, and being entirely devoid of roads, the sanctity of the place is never invaded. Very little information

could be obtained about the country or the position of the tombs. The emperors of the present dynasty have all been buried near the village of *Ma-Lan-Yu*, but some of the older graves are many miles distant amongst the mountain fastnesses. When an emperor is crowned, one of his first duties is to come here and select the site for his grave. At the time of our visit the tomb of the last emperor was not yet finished, and many hundreds of workmen living in wretched tumble-down shanties outside the walls were employed on it. The village, partaking of the miserable aspect of the workmen's dwellings, was very dirty, and though large, contained only one filthy inn, which we found on our arrival already crowded with visitors. We ordered the mules to march to the next village, and then rode off to see the Great Wall, which was a short distance to the north. The road to it was wide and level, and ran up a pretty valley through fine pasture-land; there was a row of tall willows and acacias on each side, and for the first time sheep and oxen were feeding in the meadow. The Chinese eat very little beef or mutton; they do not think it grateful to kill the useful animal that draws the plough; they consider mutton very poor food, and the butchers' shops are always kept by Mongols. In these, however, both beef and mutton can be bought for 3*d.* or 4*d.* a lb., while pork, which is considered by the Chinese as the greatest delicacy, sells for double the price.[5]

At Ma-Lan-Chen the great wall of China comes down from the hill-sides and runs across the valley, and here for the first time I saw this extraordinary work.

[5] Marco Polo, vol. ii., book ii., p. 204: 'I should tell you that in all the country of the Manzi they have no sheep.'

At this point a stream runs through the wall, which has here been broken down, leaving a gap fifty yards wide which existed before the memory of the oldest inhabitant of this place. An old gentleman who lived here invited us to take tea, and led us into a little room about twelve feet square. All the inhabitants of Ma-Lan-Chen tried to follow, but as there was not space for more than about fifty, and as the population must have been four times that number, three-fourths were sadly disappointed. Carles endeavoured to extract some information from the inquisitive but well-disposed crowd, but as each of his queries elicited nothing but questions in return, we soon said good-bye, and rode away, followed some distance beyond the houses by many of the villagers, a large proportion of whom had very severe *goître*.

Returning through Ma-Lan-Yu we continued in a level plain well cultivated, closely populated, and bounded on the north by a high range of mountains. The road was very bad, with ruts nearly a foot deep, and in places under water.

We halted for the night at Tsun-Hua-Chou, a city surrounded by good walls and a wet ditch.

September 30.—As we marched through the town in the morning, there were great quantities of very beautiful fruit and vegetables for sale: rosy apples, and others of a russet-brown; pears, green, yellow and red; peaches of all sizes, from little things no larger than an apricot, to others finer than the finest grown in England; walnuts and chestnuts were in abundance; and above all great bunches of purple grapes with a fresh bloom on them that would have caused an envious pang in the heart of a Covent Garden Jew. There were yams, brinjalls, great fat pumpkins, and a kind of hawthorn-berry, in size and

appearance like a white-heart cherry. Where the fruit comes from it is difficult to say; for fruit-trees are rarely noticed, such a thing as a vineyard is utterly unknown, and a vine is scarcely ever seen except when occasionally an open back-door gives a peep into a garden, where one may be seen trailing behind the house, with its yellow leaves all glowing in the sunshine. Who it is that eats so much fruit is a mystery, for neither meat, bread, nor grain are to be seen in anything like a proportionate quantity.

Our days here used to begin with a slow and tedious march of six hours, generally broken by a good deal of walking. Then came the mid-day halt for breakfast, and for resting and feeding the cattle. To prepare our breakfast it always seemed necessary to unpack the loads of half the mules, for Chin-Tai had the most inveterate habit of packing the knife in one box, a fork in another, and a plate in a third; the cooking utensils he would invariably distribute over all the animals, and the food was never in a convenient place; ultimately this became such a nuisance that, as all our remonstrances were in vain, we gave up a hot meal and contented ourselves with whatever we could carry in our saddle-bags. During the halt I used to write up my notes, so that the time was fully occupied. The march in the afternoon would generally be of about the same length as that of the morning, and on arrival in the evening we used both to set to work at our writing, which, with an interlude for dinner, kept us well employed till it was time for bed.

On the road, at almost every hundred yards or so, a string of donkeys is seen, laden with merchandise, jogging along at a wonderful pace, and the traveller in these Eastern countries cannot fail to be struck with the value of these well-abused animals. They

are made use of by the poorest classes, for they cost little to buy and hardly anything to keep, and from the numbers that are employed in every way, whether as beasts of burden, as draught animals, for riding purposes or for grinding corn, it is difficult to understand how the people would live without them.

Few of the villagers here had ever seen a foreigner before; but they always treated us with great civility, though, like all Chinese, they were curious and inquisitive in the highest degree, and we were objects of the deepest interest to them.

On arrival at an inn they would crowd round and make remarks on our clothing and appearance.

'What a curious-looking fellow that is,' says one, 'he has no plait, and does not shave his head.' 'No,' replies another, 'and look at his tight clothes, why it is absolutely indecent.' 'So it is; and do look at their hats, what queer things, and not even alike. What ugly eyes they have too. Their boots, however, are excellent; do not you think so?' 'Oh, yes, indeed; and I am told they never wear out.' 'Really, is it so?' 'Oh, yes, that is a fact, and water cannot get through them.' Then to Carles, 'And pray, sir, what is your honourable name? What is your honourable country; and what do you want here? Do not you find your clothes very cold, and what is your honourable age?' 'Why, indeed, you look double that, and that gentleman with you, he does not talk our language?' and so on.

Whenever we sat down to write, crowding round, they would all try to see at once; a lead pencil invariably exciting many comments.

If ever the curious people were kept out of the room they would then collect round the window; the more fortunate ones in front would poke peep-

holes in the paper with their fingers, and for hours would gaze stolidly, wondering at the way we ate, endangering our eyes and mouth with a pronged fork, would marvel at the odd and illogical mixture of cold drinks and hot viands, and above all fail to comprehend for what possible reason we could have left our homes to wander about in their country.

The hilly country we pass through is extremely pretty, and the villages generally very picturesque. Here is one with a little patch of tobacco of the richest green; here a careful cottager has built a little trellis-work in front of his house, where a gourd trailing overhead casts a pleasant shade on the road, and inside he is sure to have a lark in a cage, with the feathers burnt off its throat to make it sing.

Leaving the village, a charming valley is ascended, with a stream of water clear as crystal brawling in the bottom, and shut in at each side by high hills or mountains, where on the top of the most inaccessible pinnacle a body of Lamas have built a temple.

The valley is green with groves of willows and poplars, and just outside the next village there is a plantation of walnuts and chestnuts. As we enter it a man passes selling potatoes. Our head muleteer inquires the price, and says they are too dear, and passes on; but the seller, anxious for some business, calls out a lower sum, and in a little time a bargain is struck. Then two or three great hot potatoes are put in the scale (for nothing is ever sold in China that is not weighed or measured), weighed, and paid for, and the muleteer makes his morning meal.

Next we meet a fruit-seller, and the muleteer, after making as close a bargain as possible, selects the best pears he can see, taking care to offer one to Carles or myself with a respectful bow. He can-

not afford grapes, which are still to be bought in abundance.

At this time of the year, when the leaves are all turning yellow, the villages with the great millet or Indian corn stalks piled against the houses for firewood look very homely.

As the day wears on every one gets rather tired, especially the muleteers, who, being a little footsore, go, like Agag, delicately. One of the boys, perched on the top of his laden mule, goes to sleep; presently he gives an extra heavy nod, and nearly falls off. Riding behind him I tried to sketch his figure; but the white pony seeing a blade of grass on the other side of the road, goes off with a jerk to get it, and spoils the picture. Returning to his place in the caravan, my greedy steed cannons against Bacchus, as the mule is called that carries the wine. This is a fearful animal to have anything to do with, his load projects on each side to a prodigious distance, and the corners of his boxes are most uncompromising. The bay was called Tom Bowling, for 'his virtues were so rare,' indeed, no one ever found out that he had any at all; every man's hand was against him, and his hoofs were against every man, and he was altogether such an unpleasant animal that even the other ponies would have nothing to say to him.

October 1.—There was only one ferry-boat on the river Lai, which we had to cross in the morning, so it was rather a long business, and to while away the time, after examining the heaps of anthracite coal lying on the banks, we bought hot sweet potatoes and fed 'Spot,' who was particularly fond of these luxuries. We passed the walled town of Nan-Yang-Cheng, where the walls and all the houses inside it

had tumbled down, and the population now was entirely outside. Then, ascending a valley where the slopes of the hills were covered with beautiful long grass and dotted with yews, walnuts, chestnuts, and willows, we crossed a saddle about 600 feet above the sea, and descended to Hsi-Feng-K'ou, a pass in the Great Wall, never, I believe, before visited by a foreigner. Here officials, who were not particularly polite, demanded our passports, and took an extraordinary amount of trouble to copy them. At this place the Great Wall is about thirty feet high, and in very fair repair; it is built up, for a height of about seven or eight feet, of great granite blocks, above which are fifty-five courses of bricks, each about four inches thick. None of our party were ambitious to emulate the example of some of the naval people at Peking, who made an expedition to that modern wing of the Great Wall, which runs down not far from the capital. They carried off some bricks as trophies, and stowed them amongst their liquor; when the box was opened to assuage the thirst of these adventurous mariners, it was found to contain little but broken bits of glass and brickbats.

After passing the Great Wall the scenery changed completely. Instead of a smiling valley, with green hills and trees, we entered an almost savage country. The great mountains, on either hand, were rising up nearly bare, and even in the bottom, by the side of the stream, the trees were very few. The road was bad and rocky, and seemed almost impassable for wheeled traffic; but the mules made light of the difficulties, and we arrived in good time at a very poor inn in the mountain-village of Po-lo-Tai. Here a great barn-like apartment, where the hotel master and his family lived, where passing travellers were

accommodated, and which served as a kitchen for the whole establishment, led by an indifferent and dilapidated door to our room; this was about twelve feet square. The kang was used as the store for the family supply of millet seed, over which our beds were spread. The table was so filthy that the table-cloth I carried about was more a necessity than a luxury, and the place was soon filled with the pungent smoke of the millet stalks used as fuel in the cooking-stove close by. But these minor evils appear trifling to the hardened traveller, and we passed our night without discomfort, if not in luxury.

October 2.—Whilst waiting for the mules to get under way we watched the process of making bean-curd cakes.

The use that the Chinese make of beans is very remarkable; they cook them in all sorts of ways, eat them pickled, put them into potato patties, and convert immense quantities into bean-curd cakes.

The ordinary black and white beans are ground between two circular blocks of granite about two feet in diameter; there is a small hole in the upper stone, through which the beans are swept, water being poured on at the same time.

As the upper stone is turned a thick white cream runs out from between the stones, and is caught in a receptacle. This thick cream is then boiled with water, a very little rock-salt being added. After a time quantities of froth rise to the surface; this is skimmed off and thrown away, the remainder being tied up in a cotton cloth and squeezed tightly, after which it is put into a flat pan to set. It is finally cut up into squares, and is ready for use.

The Chinese are particularly fond of this preparation, and in the smallest village even, if nothing else

is to be procured, one or two people will be certain to be found selling the bean-curd cakes.

We had a delightful march amongst lovely scenery, the foliage of every hue, from the rich green of the young leaves to the deep yellows and reds of autumn. In the early mornings the distant outlines in the narrow valleys were lost in a deep blue haze, while the hill-tops just caught a glow from the rising sun. After some miles we emerged from some low hills into as charming a view as it is possible to conceive. The Pao-Ho was winding through a broad and fertile valley, where, in one or two places, the bends ran below small precipices; numerous villages were dotted along the banks, and in the background the fine granite mountains closed the view. We halted for breakfast at a place called Kuan-Ching, where a good deal of silk is made from the silk of worms that are fed on a kind of oak (*Quercus obovata*). The work-shop consisted of two rooms fourteen feet square; in one of them the silk from the cocoons was spun by a man who said he could do twelve hundred cocoons a day, and in the other a machine, the pattern of which has been in use for five hundred years, is used for weaving the silk. When woven the material is very strong, but very coarse, and were it not for the frayed edge it would be difficult to recognise its identity. Nearly all of it is sent to Peking, where it sells at one tael (about 5*s*. 9*d*.) for four yards of stuff about two feet wide.

This silk weaver appeared to combine his trade with that of 'patissier,' for in the room with his antiquated loom his whole family were engaged in making pies. They had a bucket of green vegetables chopped up, and about six of them, men, women, and children, were seated on the kang before a low table,

with a quantity of flour and water. One of them kneaded the dough, another made it into flat pancakes, a third handed up the green stuff, which a fourth rolled up in the pastry, while a fifth arranged the patties on a large, flat, circular tray, ready for the oven.

We bid our good old host adieu, and leaving the room, which was now crowded with about twenty people, marched on to our night's halting place.

October 3.—The next morning we descended a valley where nature had draped the landscape in such gorgeous autumn tints, that she seemed, in some wanton mood, to be challenging the feeble hand of man to imitate her wealth of colouring. The mountain sides that rose up on either hand almost precipitously glowed in golden yellow or red; down by the rill, which leapt merrily from stone to stone, the young willows had the fresh green foliage of early spring; and the very weeds growing by the roadside vied with the trees in the richness of their hues.

The villages were very neat, and more tidy than usual; we stopped in one of them to have the ponies shod. In Mongolia, horse-shoes can be obtained at almost any blacksmith's; they are like our own in shape, but are not turned down at the heel. While the operation was going on we watched some people threshing out the millet; no flail is used, but a blindfold donkey is driven round in a circle, drawing a light stone roller over the corn. After this, the winnowing is done in the old-fashioned way, by throwing up the grain into the air, and allowing the wind to blow away the chaff. The quantity of millet grown in this part of Mongolia is very great; every day we saw long strings of donkeys carrying sacks of millet south, and others bringing cotton goods in return.

We arrived in the evening at the large military

station of Pa-K'ou-Ying. Pa-K'ou is thus called by all the people in the neighbourhood, and this name generally appears in our maps; but according to Dr. Bushell, in the year 1778, when the system of government in this province was remodelled, Pa-K'ou-Ying was elevated from the rank of Ying to that of a city of the second order; its name was changed and it was called Ping-Chuan-Chou. It is still a town of great importance, and the bank notes issued by the bankers of this place pass current anywhere within a radius of one hundred miles. This is a very remarkable and almost exceptional phenomenon, no other city in China, not excepting Peking itself, possessing bankers whose credit is known half a dozen miles from its gates.

In the main street of Pa-K'ou, the houses stand about twenty feet back from an open sewer, six feet wide, that runs down the centre, and is full of a foul black slime. There are few private residences in this street, nearly all the houses being shops, of which the greater part are kept by pawnbrokers. These have an ornamental pole in front of their houses, and from their appearance seem to drive a thriving trade. They will accept anything as a pledge. Our head muleteer had some time previously pledged a donkey, and the chance of being able to redeem it with the cash advanced by us before starting, was probably his chief inducement to enter our service, as the rate of interest charged by a Chinese pawnbroker would startle a London Jew.

As there is no glass in China, except where it has been introduced by Europeans,[6] the shops are always

[6] When glass is used, it is curious to note the conservative instinct of the Chinese, who generally fasten it over the thick latticework, which is necessary when the windows are covered with paper, but of course not only is unnecessary when glass is made use of, but blocks out half the light.

quite open to the front, so that the passers-by may see the goods for sale. Private residences are usually withdrawn from a thoroughfare by a court, through the wall of which there is but a very narrow door, almost always kept shut; and riding into a town after nightfall, it is a very striking contrast to turn from a street of private houses, enclosed on both sides by a wall, pierced with nothing but the closed doors, where the very few people met with seem like spectres stalking through a city of the dead, and suddenly to enter a street of shops full of men and animals, pushing, scrambling, shouting, bargaining, or gossiping, where the mass of people collected would give a very false idea of the population of the place.

It is no doubt owing to the fact that the Chinese seem to pass their lives in the chief thoroughfares of the towns they inhabit, and leave the by-ways always deserted, that the early foreigners, who saw little but the crowded parts of the great towns, formed such exaggerated and erroneous ideas of the population of the empire. They knew that the towns covered a great area, they forgot that the houses, unlike European ones, were no more than one story high; they saw the main thoroughfares thronged with a mass of humanity, they were probably unaware that the private residences were nearly all empty during the daytime, and they seldom turned into the by-streets. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that, in the last century, the few Europeans who had landed in China came away with the impression that the whole surface of the country was covered with teeming millions of people, scarcely able to find space even in an area so immense.

Further, when they first made incursions from the great trading ports, they passed only through the

fertile and alluvial plains where the population is enormous; they ascended rivers which are the great highways of China, where fleets of junks of all sizes crowd the water. Again they argued from the analogy before their eyes; again they omitted from their calculation the vast expanse of mountainous regions, where in the narrow valleys but little room is left for population, where vast forests cover acres upon acres of ground, and where along the wild by-paths for miles there is scarcely a habitation.

Who can wonder that they estimated the population by hundreds of millions?

Pa-K'ou, though a dirty town, contained an excellent hotel, from which, after a little patience, we succeeded in excluding the throng of people that had followed us. In the large towns, the curiosity and inquisitiveness inherent in the nature of the Chinese becomes rather tiresome, and often very inconvenient; but their intense desire to look at foreigners is not to be wondered at. A foreigner in European clothes had never been here before. To a Chinaman's eyes a Western is as hideous and strange as a Chinaman at first is to ours; to his mind our clothes are not only uncouth and uncomfortable, but indecent; and to his ideas a light-haired being is diabolic; indeed the very animals seem to share this belief. A story is told of a red-haired, red-bearded Englishman who one day was walking in a country place; meeting a cart, the animals were so frightened by the extraordinary apparition, that they started, and upset the vehicle into a ditch. The Anglo-Saxon good-naturedly went to assist in setting matters straight, when the carter entreated him to get out of sight as soon as he could, as his awful appearance only terrified the animals the more.

We had a long consultation here with the innkeeper as to roads and distances. Our objects on leaving Peking were first to see the road to Hsi-Fêng-K'ou, and thence to Jehol; and afterwards to travel, as much as time would permit, in the low ground south of the mountains, and between them and the sea.

As far as Hsi-Fêng-K'ou all had been simple enough, but although Jehol lies NNE. of Hsi-Fêng-K'ou, up to this moment we had been travelling NW., our guides assuring us each day that to-morrow we should bear away towards Jehol. That city lay now to the south of west, and seemed as far off as ever, and as time was drawing on, it became a matter for consideration whether we should not abandon our intention of visiting it.

Jehol is the summer hunting-palace of the Emperor; it was here that Earl Macartney was admitted to an audience by the Emperor Chien-Lung in 1793; and it was here that when Peking was attacked by the allied armies of England and France, the court took refuge.

Our innkeeper at Pa-K'ou was an intelligent man, and he gave us a good deal of information; we ultimately with much regret abandoned the idea of finishing our journey to Jehol, and determined now to get to Shan-Hai-Kuan by the shortest route. There appeared to be several roads, and on the recommendation of our host we adopted the most northern. The maps we had with us were not of the slightest use; and it was not until we began to approach the sea, that we fully appreciated the extraordinary and circuitous route, by which we had been despatched many miles away to the north-east, before finally descending in a southerly direction to Shan-Hai-Kuan.

The lengthy discussion with our host being concluded, we sat down to enjoy our dinner with appetites sharpened by the keen mountain air. The weather was now getting very cold up here, the nights especially, we felt chilly when sitting to write with our feet on the cold stone or plaster floors, until Chin-Tai suggested that a pair of Mongol shoes would be much better to sit in than anything we had. These are made of felt, with soles of a kind of *papier maché* about three-quarters of an inch thick, not unlike those of the shoes called *gevas* in Persia. When once we had invested in them, we found that we could sit for hours before our feet became chilled.

October 4.—Our march the next day was in a much less interesting country: among great bare mountains, and through undulating broken plains with no trees except round the villages, where the willows, like the magpies, seemed omnipresent. The villages here are all clean and thriving, the people seem happy and contented, growing little but their millet and Indian corn; no fruit is ever seen here, and none is to be bought; and as the road penetrates further to the north into the great Mongolian plateau, large herds of sheep and cattle are seen feeding on the rich pasture.

As on all the borders of China, the Chinese are here gradually pushing back the aboriginal Mongols; wherever corn will grow the agricultural Chinaman is by degrees superseding the pastoral Mongol. The Chinese never take to pastoral pursuits, but in some of the valleys between Pa-K'ou and Ta-Tzŭ-K'ou, Mongol encampments may be seen, where the Mongols are beginning to cultivate the ground, and abandon the nomad life of shepherds. Whether by this means the relentless advance of the Chinese will be stopped, time alone can determine.

Our Ma-Fu used to give us a good deal of amusement. He generally had a couple of animals to lead, and now seemed to have given up riding altogether; he was usually to be seen tailing off at the rear of our caravan, with two, or sometimes three ponies dragging at his arms, and trying to stop and nibble at every blade of grass. As he walked, he used to shuffle in some strange manner altogether peculiar to himself, and at last we felt that it was really an act of charity to put Chin-Tai on his pony, and let him go on in advance to get the inn ready for us before we arrived.

October 5.—The muleteers to-day were all footsore, and the mules knocked up, especially Judas, so called because he carried the money-box. He with two others had already fallen down twice, and poor 'Spot' could hardly walk, so to refresh everybody was it advisable to halt for a day. Carles and I went out for a stroll with our guns, after warning Chin-Tai that we depended on him rather than on our weapons for our dinner: a fortunate precaution, as the only bird we obtained was a tame duck that our guide presented to us to compensate us for our want of luck.

October 6.—The next morning, although our party were not as much refreshed by the rest as we could have wished, we again started, after putting 'Spot' into a basket and covering him with a net. Our head muleteer had brought one man with him so old and decrepit that he appeared to have no vitality left; our continuous long marches had quite knocked him up; the head muleteer was now obliged to put him on a donkey, but the poor old fellow was so feeble that he could hardly keep himself from falling off; his appearance was most melancholy, and he ultimately received

the sobriquet of Lazarus, for he looked like one raised from the dead. We afterwards found out that his age was only forty-five, though he looked eighty at least.

On the road we met a poor family who had been driven by famine from their own village in Shan-Tung, and had come here, a distance of 700 miles, on foot in search of a living. Poor creatures, they had not found much to do, and were at sore straits to keep from absolute starvation.

In the evening we arrived at the gates of the walled town of Ta-Tzŭ-K'ou, a military station of some importance. We entered a street where there were no shops but pawnbrokers, all the other houses being solidly-built private residences. The street was about fifty or sixty feet wide, and the absence of shops gave it a deserted appearance, but presently our nostrils were met with the flavour of the familiar drain, and we knew that we were approaching the crowded part of the town.

In the size and bouquet of its open sewer, the main street bore a strong resemblance to that of Pa-K'ou; we soon found ourselves in the busy thoroughfare, surrounded by the usual crowd of wondering but good-natured people, who followed us to the inn. Our room here was fortunately in a courtyard of its own, the walls of which kept out all but the most inquisitive of the people; these, however, forced an entrance, and poking holes in the paper windows with their fingers, were able to examine us and our singular doings.

Fearful and strange stories were told us before going to bed of the awful nature of the country we were about to traverse, and of the ferocious brigands that infest it. How a Corean gentleman of high

rank and importance had been stripped a few days back and left naked; how a Roman Catholic priest who was travelling here had been robbed of everything he possessed; how the terror of the lawless bands that roved about the country was so constantly before the eyes of the inhabitants, that yesterday when Chin-Tai was sent forward to arrange the inn accommodation, he spread consternation amongst the peaceable townsfolk, who, because he was a stranger, thought he must also be a robber.

October 7.—We were not much impressed with fear however, but as our servants would insist on all being armed, sundry mule-loads were overhauled, and our artillery prepared. Chin-Tai trusting to size chose to carry a seven-bore duck-gun, and nothing less than fifty cartridges would satisfy his bloodthirsty mind. Carles' servant having the next choice, selected a heavy double rifle, and thus equipped they swelled in importance. Descending the river, which here was coursing through an undulating plain with rounded hills on both sides, we presently entered a little gorge, where the stream ran between high cliffs; beyond there was another wide, flat, and richly cultivated valley, where many little villages, clustering by the edge of the water, were surrounded by homely clumps of elms, on some of which a great quantity of mistletoe was growing that brought fond recollections of our island home away in the Western seas. A little further on, on either side, a very remarkable mountain, with high pinnacles 1,000 feet above the plain, stood sentinel over the pass.

At the village of Chi-Chien-Fang, where we made our halt, the people all declared that 'Spot' had ears like a lion. It is not surprising that they did not know what a lion was like, but it is difficult to under-

stand why they should all have declared that 'Spot,' was like a lion. They had never seen one, nor had they ever seen pictures of one, nor is a lion an animal frequently mentioned in Chinese books ; but as the people with one accord compared 'Spot' with a lion, of which by all sound reasoning they ought to know nothing, the only conclusion to be drawn is that if a man had to evolve a lion out of his own inner consciousness, he would adorn it with long ears like those of a spaniel.

A man asked Carles to-day if it was true that a queen reigned over us ; and when he received an affirmative reply, said that he supposed that Providence arranged for all the queen's children to be girls, so that there should never be any danger of a rupture of the Salic succession.

Leaving Chi-Chien-Fang, we marched over an undulating downy country, something like Salisbury Plain in appearance. The crops had nearly all been gathered ; the poverty of the soil was very apparent, and accounted for the sparse population and the absence of traffic. Passing the village of Ha-Go-Ta, where some few Mongols have settled down as agriculturists, we arrived in the evening at San-Tai.

October 8.—Riding to the southward, and passing here and there some small village surrounded by a wall to protect it from the troops of wolves that in the desolate winter scour the plain of San-Tai, we presently saw the mountain K'ou-Lung-Shan raising its strange head from behind the low rounded hills that enclose the valley ; K'ou-Lung-Shan, or the 'Hole and Dragon mountain,' is so called because some wanton freak of nature has driven a tunnel through its summit, and even at the distance of ten miles we could see the sky beyond like some monstrous Cyclopean eye watching over the fortunes of the plain.

The climate of October in this part of China is simply perfect; it is never hot, nor very cold, it scarcely ever rains, strong winds are of rare occurrence, and the fresh crispness of the morning air is wonderfully exhilarating. The atmosphere is exceedingly dry, inducing the most prodigious appetite, and Carles, adapting what Falstaff said of borrowing, remarked that eating only 'lingered and lingered it out, but the disease was incurable'; altogether there can be nothing more enjoyable or health-giving than an October in Mongolia.

In the summer the heat is oppressive, the land dried up, and the sun scorching. In the winter the cold is bitter, the soil is frozen many feet below the surface, and icy gales sweep across the dreary plateaux; but for just these few weeks nature seems to combine all her charms of scenery and climate, and in one short month to make amends for the alternations of excessive heat and cold.

Our march to the south must have taken us across the supposed position of the line of palisades shown on all maps, including Williamson's.

We saw nothing of them, not even one of the gates mentioned in the extract below. In all probability they have long since been used as firewood, and, notwithstanding his map, Williamson thus writes:—

'Kirin, or Central Manchuria, is bounded on the north by the Soongaris, on the east by the Usuri or Russian territory, on the south by Corea and Liau-Tung, and on the west by the Soongari, and a line of palisades, which exist only on the map, and in the imagination of H.I.M. the Emperor of China: though there is a sort of gate at the passes, and a ditch or shadow of a fence for a few yards on each side.'[7]

[7] *Williamson's Journeys in North China*, vol. ii. p. 52.

October 9.—From Ku-Ch'iao-Tzu ascending a narrow and steep valley, the road reaches a saddle, and a glorious view over mountain-tops is disclosed; descending again, in a narrow gorge, the road skirts the mountain of Yang-Shan, where there are some precipices 200 or 300 feet high, and sometimes following a stream in a wooded plain, sometimes shut in by precipitous hills on both sides, the road at length reaches K'ang-K'ou.

This place is a great dépôt for millet, and is a military station for 150 soldiers. The commandant who paid us a visit was accompanied by half the people in the place, who sat down beside us, felt our clothes, joined in the conversation, and asked all sorts of extraordinary questions. This officer had the longest and loudest tongue of any man I ever met; he shouted at and harangued the populace in a voice of thunder, and talked to Carles as if he were as deaf as a stone. He accepted our invitation to take some tea, and sitting down, smoked, with the assistance of his servant, innumerable pipes.

There are two kinds of pipe in use in China. The upper classes affect the water pipe. This is an elaborate contrivance in which highly scented tobacco, ground into a powder like snuff, is smoked. To use it with any effect, the constant assistance of a servant is necessary, who fills the minute bowl, and offers it with a lighted match to his master; the small quantity of tobacco only permits of two or three whiffs, after which the pipe is returned to the servant, who, lifting the bowl from its place, blows out the ashes, refills it, and again hands it to the smoker. The poorer people smoke the coarse rank tobacco of the country in pipes the bowls of which, no larger than a thimble, are made of white metal; reeds are

used for the stems, which vary from one to four feet in length. These pipes are their constant companions, being converted into walking-sticks when smoking is not an immediate necessity.

Whilst our military friend was haranguing us we could watch the muleteers in a corner preparing their frugal repast of Indian corn meal.

There is a popular idea that all Chinese live entirely on rice; like many other popular ideas, it is very far from the truth.

Rice is well adapted to the necessities of the warm climate of Central and Southern China; yielding an enormous harvest to the agriculturist, it is the cheapest food that can be procured, and has for these reasons become the national food of the people.

But in the colder climate of the north, or in the higher mountain regions, rice is not so suitable as Indian corn or oats, nor can it be so easily cultivated. One or the other of these grains consequently takes its place.

Here our muleteers lived almost entirely on Indian corn; they ground it into a meal, mixed it with a little water, and steam-baked the preparation.

October 10.—We marched from Kang-K'ou up a narrow valley, where the mules continually stumbled and fell over the great rocks scattered pell-mell over the path, to a ridge from which we looked down upon the most extraordinary and confused mass of mountain-tops. Descending again and crossing successive ridges, where, in one of the valleys, we found some thirty men washing the sand for the very minute quantity of gold in it, we gained the summit of the Ku-Ling Pass, and, when we put our feet upon the crest, a view so lovely burst upon us that an exclamation of wonder involuntarily escaped our lips.

Great mountains in front of us, lit up by the setting sun, shone in all the glory of golden hues, which changed to purple on the lower slopes, and deepened into blue in the valleys below.

This picture was, as it were, set in a frame by the narrow gorge that ran down from where we stood, and whose rocky and almost perpendicular sides, rising high above our heads, presented every variety of colouring. The bluish grey of the beetling cliffs mingled with the mellow glow of autumn on the trees, and here and there a touch of delicate green showed some young sapling just starting into life.

We neither of us could leave the spot, though the hour was late, but stood and watched the changing tints on the mountain-tops. The rosy blush faded from them one by one as the sun fell in the west, little by little the transparent blue in the valley deepened, and the darkening shade stole up the mountain sides; at length the last flush melted from the highest peak, one star shot its first faint ray of light, and heralding the night reminded us that we must tear ourselves away from the glorious scene.

A little temple, perched on the very summit of the northern face, bowered in trees and shrubs, and overlooking the quiet valley, stands in a spot at this season of the year as fair as any on the earth.

By the light of the stars that shone with marvellous brilliancy in that cold clear air, we followed the stream by a rocky path to San-Cha, where we halted after a march of thirty miles. The inn here was wretched. A long low shed like a barn led through a door that would hardly close into a small place beyond, where there was no floor but the natural soil, through which great stones jutted up; a few dirty shreds only remained to remind the traveller that the

window had once been covered with paper, and the dust lay inches thick on the furniture. The kang was lighted, but the pungent smoke came pouring out upon us through yawning cracks in the dilapidated structure. These trifles, however, made but little impression on us, and we slept as soundly as on the most luxurious of couches.

October 11.—From San-Cha the road descends a rocky valley to I-Yuan-K'ou, a pass in the Great Wall not previously visited by foreigners, where our passports were again examined by some very civil officials, who invited us to stop and take tea with them. Except just at the crossing of the stream, the Great Wall is here in the same good state of preservation as at the other points visited by us; it is the same marvellously massive structure, and there is something very imposing in its appearance, as, with towers at regular intervals, it ascends the steepest mountain sides, is carried over the tops of the highest hills, plunges deep into the valleys, and crosses many a mountain torrent. There is something very impressive in the thought that for centuries this wall has looked upon the same country, has seen emperors come and dynasties go, and that for hundreds of miles, away towards the west, it stretches across the boundary of many provinces, till it is lost in the distant deserts of Gobi.

The running stream at this point appears to have washed away part of the foundations, for the wall had fallen away, leaving a gap through which anyone might ride; the farce, however, is still kept up of soldiers at the gate, which might be knocked down by a strong man's kick.

We halted for breakfast at a garrison town, where we excited more than the usual amount of interest. The commandant came to pay us a visit, bringing

with him a powerfully smelling rabble, who soon blocked up every available corner in the apartment.

This was a foolish old man who had no information to impart, and could ask no more intelligent questions than our honourable names and country.

After having watched him smoke many pipes, we found a want of excitement in the amusement; and leaving him, we threaded our difficult way through the dense but good-humoured crowd that thronged the innyard, and continued our journey over a very stony road, through an undulating country, gradually leaving the mountains on the left. Crossing a good many small streams, where slippery stepping-stones were provided for pedestrians, we gained the crest of a small spur thrown out from the mountain, and now the calm blue sea lay stretched before us, flecked here and there with the red sails of a fishing-junk.

Seven miles away lay Shan-Hai-Kuan, and behind it rose the steep mountain up which Fleming climbed on a blazing summer day, and where he so nearly lost his life.[8]

We sent Chin-Tai forward on the red pony to get things ready, but about a quarter of an hour afterwards an animal was seen approaching that bore an uncommonly strong resemblance to 'Tom Bowling'; and in a few minutes the familiar form of that virtuous creature, riderless and without a saddle, kicking up his heels here, and nibbling a blade of grass there, was unmistakable.

In his playful way he had set to work kicking, broken his saddle girths, and disposed of Chin-Tai; and as he now declined to be caught, we deployed our force across the plain and drove him before us, detaching parties to the right or left whenever the

[8] Fleming's *Travels on Horseback in Manchu Tartary.*

cunning beast made long flank movements. At length his foot became entangled in his bridle, he found himself unable to move, and surrendered, but with a very bad grace.

We took up our quarters in a rather small inn, in a suburb outside the west gate of Shan-Hai-Kuan, where we were very quiet. It was quite a new sensation to be able to wash, eat, drink, read, and write without being surrounded by a gaping crowd.

October 12.—Shan-Hai-Kuan means 'mountain and sea barrier,' and is so called because the mountains here run down to the sea.

Old Lazarus had lately proved such a serious charge, that we determined to send him to Peking with letters; and, as we expected henceforth to be always on the level plain, we hired a cart to make up for the loss of the animal that the old muleteer was to take with him.

CHAPTER III.

'ATHWART THE FLATS AND ROUNDING GRAY.'

Halt at Shan-Hai-Kuan—Deserted City of Ning-Hai at Sea Terminus of Great Wall—Ancient Inscriptions and Vandal Treatment—Dirty Habits of Chinese—Salt Manufacture described—Itinerant Pieman's Wares—Chinese Love of Hot Water—Mouth of the Lan—Mud Flats by the Sea—Rich Monotonous Plains—Kublai Kaan's Shooting Grounds—Chinese House Fittings—Swampy Plains—Tumultuous Curiosity at Fêng-T'ai—River of Pei-T'ang—Coal expected to be found to Order—The Pei-T'ang Commandant—The Ferry—Mud Flats and Fragrant Artemisia—Dutch-like Landscape—Water-logged Country—Weary Swamps—Rest at Urh-Chuang—Hawking Ground of the Great Kaan—Chinese Wrangles—Chinese Agriculture and Use of Sewage—The Traveller's Sympathy with Marco Polo—Swamp-Lands again — Ling-Ting-Chen — Marshlands — Hsin-An-Chen — Figures bound for the Fair—Roadside Pictures—Pleasures of Travel —Peking reached again—Recreations there—'Bis cocta Recambe'—Chinese Dinners—Sir T. Wade's regretted Departure—The Inscribed Stone Drums—Visit to the Summer Palace—Needless Havock—A Great Bell—Modern Cambaluc—Public Examinations—Departure from Peking—The Hilarious Serving-Man—The Kang Mismanaged—Tien-Tsin, a Land of Fat Things—Shanghai once more.

October 13.—We halted a day at Shan-Hai-Kuan, and the next morning, just as we were starting, we heard a very loud altercation in the courtyard, and found old Lazarus wrangling with the head muleteer, who owed him some wages. The old man declined to start for Peking without payment; he had laid an embargo on the headman's donkey, and was sitting down in the gateway, stolidly holding the reins, which he declined to give up. The head muleteer, having no money, thus found the animal that he had only

lately redeemed from pawn again seized as a pledge, and matters seemed fairly to have arrived at a dead lock. They wrangled thus for upwards of an hour, anyone passing by, of course, stopped, not so much to listen as to join in the dispute; two soldiers, who had been sent to escort us, became very energetic, and looked as if they were quite capable of solving the problem on Solomon's system, even if they did not conclude by cutting off the heads of a few of the bystanders by way of encouraging the others; the little boys ran about in high glee, or crawled between the legs of their elders, thoroughly enjoying the sport; until at last we ended the dispute by promising to see the old man righted.

Matters thus being settled without any bloodshed, we mounted our ponies, and with our escort rode away a couple of miles to Ning-Hai, an ancient and deserted city, built a few yards from the edge of the sea.

The Great Wall forms the eastern face of this city, and originally must have been built out some distance below high-water mark. Time, however, has laid its hand on the venerable building, and now at this point it is little better than a ruin.

Cantering round the south-west angle of Ning-Hai, we suddenly saw some huge English characters painted up in white letters on the ancient city wall. For a few seconds we were both so surprised that we were unable to read the words. We very soon realised the situation, and understood that ships cruising in these waters were accustomed to land their crews and desecrate the noble old walls of the venerable city, which for centuries has looked upon the lapse of time, and has watched the varied fortunes of the empire, from the days when its civilisation led the march of

the world, through its declining fortunes, to its present decay.

Close by stand two very ancient slabs; no man now can say when first they were planted there, or in memory of what, or whom; on one was written the words 'God divides the land from the sea,' and on the other, an obscure quotation from some ancient classic which might be interpreted by the Scotch proverb, 'every little makes a mickle,' and might refer to the Great Wall, which enormous structure has been made by the accumulation of many bricks; but whatever might be its meaning, as we stood in the solitude, made more solemn by the deserted appearance of the city, whose walls enclosed little but crumbling ruins, the scene was very impressive; the thoughts of all the events that must have happened, in the long roll of ages that had elapsed since first the hand of man commenced to raise this pile, crowded through our minds, and we could not but regret that Europeans should thus desecrate what must almost be a sacred spot, should destroy the day dreams in which fancy here would love to indulge, and force upon the mind of the passing traveller that he was living in an unromantic age of steam and iron.

British sailors were not alone in the ruthless act; crews of all nations had daubed their vessels' names, and worst of all, on the very face of the old slab that bore testimony to the builder's belief in an Omnipotent Power, the commonplace vulgarity of huge sprawling letters made us ask what manner of men can these be, who take ashore great pails of whitewash, and in the futile attempt to perpetuate the memory of a modern ship carry to these distant lands nothing better than the spirit of the scribbling tourist!

Time, however, will avenge itself; nature's ele-

ments will in due course remove the hideous records, and long after the bodies of the authors have turned to dust, still, for years, may these old buildings look out upon that same sea that bore them here.

Turning away, we spurred our ponies into a gallop over the wide plain.

The country here is thickly populated and closely cultivated. At every half-mile we passed a village surrounded by trees, and in the fields the second crop was now nearly ready for the sickle; but as we rode westwards the amount of cultivation gradually diminished, and we presently came to wet and heavy roads. Wastes of swamp and mud stretched between us and the sea, from which creeks here and there ran up, receiving rivers from the now fast receding mountains. As we cantered on, our escort fell further and further behind, and as the day waned, they turned away to a neighbouring village, tired of following the mad foreigners in their long long ride.

At half-past six o'clock, after a march of more than forty miles, we met the head muleteer by the side of a stream.

He had come out with the innkeeper's son to welcome us, and lead the way to the hotel. This was a pleasant sign of hospitality and goodwill, and, with the excellent dinner that Chin-Tai gave us, helped us to forget some abominably dirty tricks we had discovered in the investigation we had had time to make amongst our baggage, during our halt at Shan-Hai-Kuan.

Foreigners, when they return to their own country, often lament the good servants they have left behind in China, daily yearn for their service, and deplore that they cannot have all Chinese servants at home.

These are undoubtedly excellent, but the dirt and filth that would accumulate in an English kitchen, after about a fortnight of Chinese management, would make the rash housewife repent her of her importation. The Chinese people are dirty beyond description in all their habits.

Their ablutions are usually limited to passing a wet rag dipped in hot water over their faces. All through the winter they wear the same clothes night and day; and as the cold weather advances, it is positively ludicrous to see the people gradually looking fatter and fatter as wadded garment is added to wadded garment. The children especially, in the depth of winter, look like dumplings rolling about the street. As the ice thaws again, and summer approaches, one after another the extra clothes are abandoned, until the people resume their natural and normal size.

In their mode of eating they are not more cleanly than in their persons; even amongst the richest classes the table, after a dinner, is covered with pieces of food, and quantities of grease that have been spilt on it from the overflowing bowls, whilst a débris of bones, kernels of fruit, and lumps of gristle are collected on the floor around the feasters. As might be supposed, their dwellings are as dirty as everything else. Their rooms are never cleaned; dust, dirt, and rubbish of all kinds may sometimes be swept up underneath the bed, or behind some lumbering piece of furniture, but there it lies for years, unheeded and untouched, except when some active-minded person chooses to increase its volume.

October 14.—The road from Niu-T'ou-Yai to Sha-Ho passes over a flat plain, where large stretches of cultivation are interspersed with marshy tracts, and

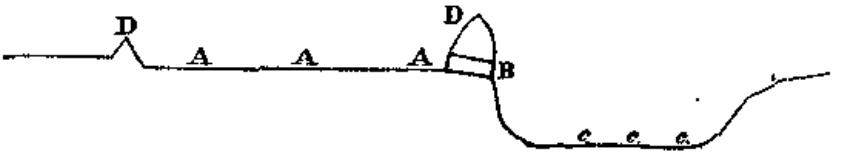
the villages, tolerably numerous though small, are embosomed in fine clumps of trees.

At P'u-Ho-Ying, a miserable place, situated in the middle of a desolate salt marsh, we saw the operations in the manufacture of salt.

A ridge of mud, six inches high, encloses a space twelve feet by four feet. At one end a little drain is formed by piercing the ridge, and a hollow is scooped out in the ground below the drain. The earth in the neighbourhood is all strongly impregnated with salt, and lumps of it are put into the tank formed by the mud enclosure.

Fresh water is then poured over the earth ; this

FIG. 1.



A A A. Tank where the earth is placed.
B. Small drain.
c c c. The receiver or hollow scooped out to receive the liquor draining from A.
D. Earthen ridge.

drains slowly into the hollow, and in its passage becomes a strong solution of salts. The water is then boiled three times in flat circular dishes.

By this successive evaporation, the different salts are thrown down at different temperatures, or by the varying strength of the solution. Common salt, or chloride of sodium, being the most easily held in solution, is not deposited until the final operation, and thus salt of more or less purity is obtained.

The process of evaporation is carried on in little circular enclosures of straw, to prevent the wind disturbing the surface of the liquor ; and in the neigh-

bourhood of this town the whole plain is dotted with these queer-looking erections.

From P'u-Ho-Ying a heavy sandy road leads to Sha-Ho, an unimportant place, where we were lodged in a room that smelt like a sepulchre.

A mist hung over the plain as we left the village of Sha-Ho, and little could be seen of the flat country, until, as the day advanced, we reached the town of T'uan-Lin, surrounded by vast quantities of graves, and situated at the edge of a mud flat half a mile wide, beyond which the stagnant waters of a broad lagoon could be seen through the haze. A sandy road led westwards through a busy, thriving country, where in the distant north the dim outline of a mountain could be seen, where the only crop left standing was the cotton, and where the people were busy in the fields pulling up the roots of the millet.

After the crops are cut, the stubble is not ploughed up immediately, but the people first go over the field with hoes, digging up the roots one by one. Afterwards they are followed by others with wooden mallets, who beat all the earth from the roots, and on a dry and windy day make a great dust, very unpleasant to the travellers' eyes. This being done a third party collects the roots in large baskets, takes them into the villages, and stacks them for fuel. The field is, however, not yet ready for the plough, for now a rake is taken all over it, and the few straggling stalks or bits of grass carefully collected. These also serve as fuel.

Whilst sitting at breakfast, an itinerant pieman came in with a tray, and we investigated his wares. Vegetable patties, such as we had seen made by the silk-spinners at K'uan-Cheng, are very favourite delicacies amongst the Chinese, and the pieman had plenty; also puddings of broad beans, enveloped in a covering

of mashed sweet potato, and fried in a superabundance of oil. Cakes of wheaten flour, with treacle in the middle, and steam-baked, and others of ground millet with scorched millet sprinkled on the top, figured amongst the more simple wheaten cakes that the pie-man had for sale, and which serve to vary the monotony of the Indian corn diet of the people.

Fond as the Chinese are of variety, and dearly as they generally love a bit of fish, strangely enough there was none to be bought in any of these coast villages. In the south of China vast quantities of fish are caught and salted, and form a very large proportion of the food of the people; but here, notwithstanding all our inquiries, we could never hear of fish to be had, fresh or salt.

Some people with whom we were conversing offered us hot water to drink, and regretted they had no tea, which they said they could not afford. It is a very common thing in this part of the country for people to drink hot water, as they, like all Chinese, dislike cold drinks; milk, as everywhere else in China, is unknown, and of course butter also.

We continued our march over the plain to the river Lan, and thence to Lê-Ting-Hsien, which all maps show on the left bank of the river, although it is really seven miles distant from it, and on its western or right bank.

It is difficult to understand how European geographers have contrived to introduce such an error, but a Chinese map in my possession is the only one in which this town is shown in its proper position.

October 16.—From Lê-Ting-Hsien the country did not vary in appearance: still as flat as a billiard-table, closely cultivated, and with many people in the fields; the villages, enclosed in the same thick

clumps of trees, were dotted about at almost every quarter of a mile.

The absence of watercourses in this country is very remarkable. From one large river to the next, the road, though running across the line of drainage, will often pass over scarcely the smallest rill; and to this is owing, in a great measure, the serious floods that constantly occur, and do so much damage.

We arrived in good time at Tang-Chia-Ho, and attempted to go out duck-shooting; but, being followed by people enough to beat for a tiger, we very soon gave it up in despair.

October 17.—The room we slept in was exceedingly dirty and stuffy, and even the carbolic acid that had been thrown all over it, utterly failed in overcoming the very ancient and fishlike smell that pervaded the apartment, arising from the manufacture of shrimp sauce, in which the innkeeper had been engaged some weeks previously. The same fire that cooked the dinner passed through the kang, so that, as the night was very close and oppressive, we were nearly baked; and as it was the first day of the new moon, the jovial spirits of Tang-Chia-Ho spent the night just outside the house in letting off crackers that exploded with a report like a rifle.

Long before our usual hour, we were fairly driven out of bed by the fleas, and calling Chin-Tai, we bade him shake out our blankets; and then we overheard the innkeeper, who felt his reputation injured, declare that they were not fleas, but only bugs.

We rode down to Lao-Mu-K'ou on one of the mouths of the Lan, where there were a few people about who seemed to have nothing in particular to do. We sat down on some logs amongst the sailors, who told us that the navigable entrance to the river

was some miles away, and that junks entering there supplied the Tien-Tsin arsenal with coal, which was brought down by the river from Jehol.

From Lao-Mu-K'ou to Ma-T'ou-Ying the road passes to the north of the border of waste lands which fringe the coast, and there is no variation in the aspect of the country.

October 18.—From Ma-T'ou-Ying we rode down towards the sea, the soil getting poorer and villages more scarce as the coast was approached. In many places the fields were enclosed with mud walls to keep out the floods ; and after a few miles we entered a dreary mud flat, on which nothing grows but a miserable weed ; the monotony is not varied even by the wild fowl generally found in the most desolate places ; for even they appear to think this country too fearful, and abandon it to the few miserable human beings who live here in wretched and tumble-down shanties.

Everything is salt, the earth, the air, and the water ; not a tree breaks the dismal outline ; so doleful is the place that it would seem to have been created to teach humanity contentment ; for however little a man might have to be thankful for on coming hither, he would at least go away blessing Providence that the lines had fallen to him in less unpleasant places.

This stretch of mud-flat extends for about five miles in-shore ; we were glad to leave it and ride back to Ma-T'ou-Ying, where a fine bunch of grapes was very refreshing to our palates, dried up as they were by the saltness of the air.

Leaving Ma-T'ou-Ying behind us, as we approached Ho-Chuang, the country again gradually resumed its thriving aspect. All around us stretched a wide expanse of perfectly flat and cultivated plain, where not

a square yard was lost. No land here can be wasted on hedges or walls, and nothing marks the divisions between the fields save the change of crops, or an alteration in the direction of the furrows.

Towards evening, the sight of an unusual crowd outside a village made us aware that we had arrived at our halting place. We rode through a double rank of people, who closed in on us as we passed, and followed us to the inn.

They soon began to fight for front places at the show, poked holes in the windows, and nearly broke down the doors in the frantic excitement caused by the production of the mysterious pen and paper. They were a good-natured crowd, however, and, after indulging for a few hours in the simple pastime of looking on, gradually retired, and all became still.

October 19.—We found the road to the north from Ho-Chuang very heavy, running through deep sand, in which our cart-wheels sometimes sank nearly up to the axles; and although the mules struggled manfully, encouraged by the cheery voice of the carter, the journey proved a long one.

Though the plain is densely populated, there did not seem to be many labourers in the fields; but the villages were proportionately busy, and the people were engaged about their houses, renewing the fences of millet-stalk with which they surround their little patches of cabbage garden.

The monotony of the scenery, as Kai-Ping is approached, is varied by the mountains, which rise abruptly from the plain, immediately behind the little village, to a height of some 3,000 or 4,000 feet. They do not appear to run in regular chains, but are almost entirely detached from one another, or joined by very low saddles.

This great alluvial plain of Pe-Chi-Li, here forty miles in width from Kai-Ping to the sea, where not the smallest irregularity breaks the horizontal outline, has evidently in former ages been submerged, and the salt waves must then have washed the feet of the Kai-Ping Hills.

It must have been here that the great Kaan went out with elephants and hawks, and enjoyed the royal sport described by Marco Polo.

And now, the times again are changed; the extensive fields of very good coal, that have lain for ages untouched amongst the mountains behind Kai-Ping, are to be worked; a railway is to be laid from that village to Peh-T'ang; and over the fields, where the great Kaan was used to fly his hawks at cranes, steam and iron will lead the van of civilisation.

At Kai-Ping we slept at an inn, which was admirably characteristic of Chinese architecture and carpentry.

It is said that in the remote ages, when the people, who were originally nomads, settled down to an agricultural life, they built their first houses as nearly as possible like their tents. Hence the wavy outline of their gables, and their eccentric custom of building a heavy roof on strong upright beams, filling in the walls afterwards.

Although the chairs and tables are neatly put together, the people care nothing for finished carpentry about the buildings of an ordinary house.

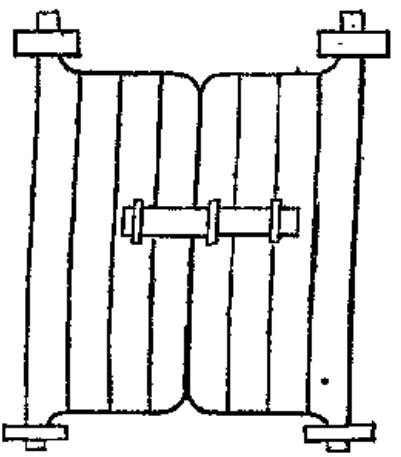
The beam that supported the roof of our room at Kai-Ping was nothing more than a crooked tree; no attempt had been made to straighten it, and, except that the rough outside had been just taken off with an adze, it had scarcely been touched with a tool.

The door-frames, if frames they can be called, are

always made of young crooked trees, left unplaned, so that when the doors are closed, gaps are often left two or three inches wide.

In some of the larger inns of the important towns things are better done, doors and window-frames being to a certain extent fitted; but even in the best there is generally a big hole under the door, where the mud and bricks have been gradually kicked away. A window that will open is very rare in Chinese houses, and the doors are invariably fastened with a sliding latch. I do not recollect ever to have seen a door

FIG. 2.



fastened on any other system, or hung in any other way, than with a couple of pivots, one above and one below, each fitted into a socket; sometimes a hole in the floor is substituted for the lower socket.

October 20.—At Kai-Ping we again turned our backs upon the mountains, and marched over the usual plain, where in some of the fields the young winter crops were now about two inches high. When the winter sets in they become smaller rather than larger, and remain, as it were, dormant through the snow and frost until the spring, when they shoot up with great rapidity.

The people were now very busy threshing out the corn, stacking the fuel, and making things ready for the winter; in the little enclosures before the cottages of every village we used to see the whole family sitting down husking the Indian corn.

A huge mat would be spread on the ground before them, into which they would throw the grain; the husks would be put aside to feed the pigs; and the leaves thrown outside the enclosure into the streets, to dry for fuel.

The charm of variety was usually lent to the most tedious day, by some fresh freak on the part of the red pony. At Han-Ch'êng, whilst we were calmly discussing our breakfast, we heard a great uproar, and looking out, found that very original animal dashing about the yard with a light horse-trough tied to his halter. The simple Ma-Fu had fancied that, like the other ponies, he could be cheated into the belief that he was secured, no matter how trivial the object to which the rope was fastened.

This red pony was evidently looked upon as a sort of outcast by the other animals, who if separated by a few yards were always unhappy, and would keep up a lively conversation. But 'Tom' never joined in this, and used to walk on, with his ears back, ever on the look-out for an opportunity of kicking somebody or something.

Between Han-Ch'êng and Fêng-T'ai the country gradually changes in appearance; patches of uncultivated land are seen, with here and there a large extent of swamp; and were it not for the wide ditches at both sides of the roads, travelling would be difficult at any time, and impossible after heavy rain.

Fêng-T'ai is a large military station on the left bank of an important river that falls into the Pei-

T'ang, and is here forty yards wide, and navigable for boats drawing two to three feet of water, and carrying about eighteen tons.

Next to Shan-Hai-Kuan, it was the largest town we had stopped in, and being a very busy thriving commercial place, the crowds that came to see us exceeded anything we had yet encountered. The hotel fortunately was very large, and there was an inner apartment having no direct communication with the outside.

The news of the foreign arrivals soon spread abroad, and every man and child in this populous place helped to crowd the streets in the neighbourhood, and to fill the inn-yard.

Our quarters were not long sacred, and the mob in them at length became so unpleasant that we were compelled to turn them out and bar the door. The peace that now reigned inside for a few moments was a striking contrast to the wild hubbub and tumult that prevailed in the court.

But soon the surging mass of humanity burst the entrance, and poured into the outer apartment. The crash of the splintered door, for the moment frightened all but one of the boldest spirits, who advanced a couple of paces ; but the moment one of us rose, his courage vanished, and he fled precipitately. This thoroughly alarmed the crowd, who, seized by a sudden panic, stampeded towards the street, tumbling one over the other in the most ludicrous fashion ; and 'Spot,' hearing a rushing of many feet, dashed valiantly at the smallest boy he could see, and caught him by the skirt of his garment, before we could recover from the laughter into which we had been plunged at the ridiculous spectacle.

But curiosity soon overcame timidity, and the

crowd advanced afresh. We succeeded, however, at length, in fastening the door securely; and after a couple of hours, the people, tired of looking at nothing, gradually dispersed and allowed us to spend a quiet evening.

October 21.—The river Pei-T'ang, which flows near Fêng-T'ai, is fringed with beds of tall reeds, and carefully embanked; it winds and twists through the flat plain which gradually assumes a poorer aspect as Lu-T'ai is approached, and at Pei-T'ang, where the river empties itself into the gulf of Pe-Chi-Li, there is nothing but a waste of mud-flats in every direction.

From Fêng-T'ai to Lu-T'ai there is a road on each side of the river.

At first, as we advance towards the south, though the marshy tracts are larger and more frequent, and the land is intersected with ditches varying from ten to twenty feet in width, yet the few villages that dot the plain seem thriving enough, and the people appear happy and contented, carefully cultivating their neat gardens, in which they raise magnificent vegetables.'

In China all riverside commercial towns seem squalid and straggling in proportion to their prosperity. Lu-T'ai is no exception, and being a thriving place is as dirty as any in the province of Pe-Chi-Li. Sea-going junks, of about ninety tons burden, come up here from Pei-T'ang, and discharge the grain with which they are laden; this is then stored in the town, reshipped into smaller boats, taken up the river, and distributed over the country.

The tide in the gulf of Pe-Chi-Li is felt as high up as Lu-T'ai; the river is from eighty to a hundred yards wide, and at low water there is a depth of ten feet off the town. When the tide is high the banks are no more than a foot above the surface, and during

the rainy season the river overflows, and floods the neighbouring country.

On arriving here we were much astonished to learn that there was another foreigner in the place. This turned out to be an English mining engineer, who had been employed by the Chinese Government to examine the coal districts above Kai-Ping.

He was travelling with a Chinese gentleman who could talk English, and was his interpreter. Of course we all dined together, and passed a festive evening in that strange out-of-the-way place. He gave us the first items of news we had heard since leaving Peking; rumours of war between England and Russia, and another appearance, at or near Shanghai, of the great sea-serpent.

He was congratulating himself upon the success of his researches in the Kai-Ping Hills; for he had been previously sent to examine the coal-beds in another province, and when he had reported unfavourably on them, the Chinese Government had intimated that they had a very mean opinion of a mining engineer who could not find coal when ordered to do so!

October 22.—From Lu-T'ai we found the country more and more wretched as we again approached the coast. A few miles to the south we passed through a town on the banks of the river busy with some salt works; and then, until we reached Pei-T'ang, with the exception of one solitary hut in the middle of the fearful swamp, not a building, nor a tree, nor one spot of cultivation broke the monotony of the mud flat, over which a strong and cold north-east wind drove clouds of dust, that every now and then completely shut out the view.

The river was sometimes close to us on the right, at others, taking a sweep, it bent away till in the mist

we could hardly distinguish the masts and sails of the junks that crowded the watery thoroughfare.

As we approached the mouth of the river, the North Pei-T'ang fort came into sight, and turning aside from the direct road we galloped off to visit the commandant.

He invited us into his house to take tea, and we were at once struck with the unusual cleanliness of his room. The regular warming apparatus was wanting, but its place was occupied by the raised dais, also called a kang, which, though common in Southern China, is rarely seen in the North. Two mattresses covered with chintz were spread on the dais, with one of the usual little low tables between them. At the centre of the end wall behind, there was a kind of altar with some yellow dragons painted on it, and a small table and a couple of chairs were arranged on the other sides of the room, in perfectly symmetrical, but unpicturesque order.

Instead of pictures, mottoes or verses from the ancient writings, in very large Chinese characters, were hung up, completing the furniture and ornamentation of the apartment.

Fresh clean paper, in which a pane of glass about six inches square had been let in, covered the window, and for a Chinese house the room was marvellously clean, and a striking contrast to the generality of the dwellings of even the richer classes, where dirty floors seem never to be swept, dirty paper never removed from cobwebby window-frames, and dirty furniture never cleaned.

This officer's servants were more respectful than servants usually are; the people did not crowd into the room, or join in the conversation unasked; and altogether our host was rather a favourable specimen of a Chinese official.

The pipe was, of course, handed round as a matter of civility, and then tea was brought in, which, made of salt and muddy water, was neither refreshing nor palatable.

After a little polite conversation we took our leave, and rode on to the wretched hamlet that is built on the left bank of the river opposite Pei-T'ang.

The river here has opened out to a breadth of two hundred yards, and is crowded with many junks of all sizes. When the wind is strong it is a dangerous matter to cross it in the crazy ferry-boats of the place, and sometimes impossible.

We had much difficulty in persuading the ferryman to venture, and it was only by the promise of great largesse that we ultimately overcame his scruples, and this not until we had spent about an hour in a little shanty filled with a filthy and ragged crowd of the poorest of even poor Chinese.

They brought all sorts of fearful odours with them, but by the aid of tobacco, we succeeded not only in tolerating their presence, but in extracting various scraps of information.

At length the heart of the obdurate boatman was softened, and leaving our friends on the bank we embarked on our perilous journey.

The first boat-load was composed of our two selves, our two servants, two muleteers, the cart, and five mules. We fully expected an accident, as the crowd of men and animals was so great that there was hardly room for the men rowing; and as the boat had no bulwarks, and was only just wide enough to let a horse stand across it, it was a marvel that one of the animals did not put its hind legs into the water. We crossed, however, in safety, and reached Pei-T'ang, in appearance the dirtiest, the most squalid, and

utterly poverty-stricken place that can well be conceived.

The inn was in complete accord with the foulness of its surroundings; its yard, deep with rotting mire, was barely large enough to accommodate all our animals, who whisked their tails in at the door of the room where we sat, pervaded by a reeking odour from the accumulation of abomination outside.

October 23.—When the dismal town of Pei-T'ang had been left behind we rode over the most miserable mud-flat, where there was not a bird, and where not even a blade of grass would grow. After two miles there was a little weed on the damp mud, but we saw not a living thing until we reached the banks of a canal where there were a few people about.

Here immense piles of long dry grass were stacked, and sweet-smelling artemisia, that filled the air with its perfume. We marched another mile without much change of scenery, but after crossing another canal the aspect of the country suddenly and completely changed.

The ground was covered with the same long dry grass, and sweet artemisia, which the people were cutting, stacking, and carting to the banks of the canal. Just at this moment the clouds which had threatened rain all the morning dispersed, and the sun shone out cheerfully on a landscape that was very pleasant after the miserable country we had now happily left behind.

There were no villages to be seen, for during the summer rains all the neighbourhood is under water.

An excellent firm road followed near to the northern bank of the canal, and after a march of eighteen miles, we arrived at a small quiet village, where the people did not attempt to crowd about the inn; and

where the landlord, a most respectable old man, quite won our hearts by his kindness to poor 'Spot,' who was completely knocked up by the incessant and lengthy marches.

The pleasant inhabitants of Huai-Tien differed in opinion as to the distance of Urh-Chuang, where we hoped to pass the night. Some said it was thirty, and others only fifteen miles; it was quite clear, however, that the march was a long one.

We started as soon as possible, and a ride of eight miles over the same sweet-smelling country brought us to Fêng-T'ai-Tzŭ, where the canal was crossed by a ferry. Sitting on the banks waiting for the boat we were able to enjoy the charms of a quiet evening landscape.

The canal opened out here into a broad fleet, and a quarter of a mile away across the water there was a town that called to mind many of the old Dutch towns at the mouth of the Scheldt. The sun was setting behind it, and threw its nearly horizontal rays athwart the wide expanse of marsh, where great lazy herons stood with their feet in the mud, watching for the fish. On the water there were many boats, laden with the sweet artemisia, or carrying a couple of peasants who were taking home in their big baskets the purchases they had been making in some neighbouring market town.

On the bank beside us a few people and donkeys were waiting for their turn in the ferry-boat which was being slowly punted from the other side.

Our cart and mules went over first, and this was a most comical sight. The boat was flat-bottomed, flat-sided, square stern, and square-bowed. Two feet broad at one end, it widened to five feet at the other. The cart was run backwards over the narrow end, its two wheels outside, and its axle rest-

ing across the boat; the shafts were tilted up in the air, and a man squatted behind to keep the back down; the narrow end of the boat was not more than a couple of inches out of the water, and the body of this unstable-looking craft was loaded with three mules and three or four men.

In this manner the transit was safely effected, and eventually horses, mules, cart, servants, and ourselves arrived at the further side.

Fresh inquiries as to roads and distances did not tend to reassure our minds; we were told that the roads were bad, that they twisted and turned like a river in a plain, and that we yet had a long march before us. Chin-Tai was therefore ordered to get a guide, at any price, from one of the villages, which were tolerably numerous in this locality.

The villages were all exactly like one another; built of mud, with mud roofs, they were surrounded by the most luxurious cabbage-gardens, each raised about a couple of feet above the level of the country, to save them from the floods that occur regularly in the summer; every villager seemed to have his own little plot, separated from the next by a miniature canal.

The roads near the villages were also raised, and at each side there were wide ditches, sometimes opening out into little ponds, where men and boys were busy in the black mud arranging the fish traps that seemed to give them plenty of occupation, for the time that they could spare from threshing corn, making bean-curd cakes, or grinding flour.

As we left the houses behind, the road, no longer higher than the swampy ground, became very difficult, full of great holes and soft places, where the cart could hardly pass; and as night closed in, we came to a forced halt at a regular morass.

Our hunchbacked guide now made a cast to the left to find a crossing; away he plunged into the darkness, and following the sound of the cracked voice that we heard at intervals, we floundered about in the quagmire, now to the north, then south, round to the east, and back again to the west.

The cries of the carter, as he urged his tired mules to fresh efforts in the deepening bog, scarcely overpowered the croak of the bull-frogs.

At length, finding ourselves close to a village that we had left half an hour before, we began to have serious doubts of the local knowledge of our guide, and we tried to catch him, that we might question him as to where we were, but he was like a will-o'-the-wisp, and when anyone came near him he danced off into the darkness and disappeared: there was nothing for it but to follow our quasimodo as best we could—now knee-deep in mud and water; now, our feet resting for a moment on a bit of hard ground, hopes were raised only to be speedily dispelled by a sudden plunge into a fresh hole; now the shrill voice of the guide was lost behind a wall of tall reeds; and now again we found ourselves almost at his heels. So we went on, until at length perseverance was rewarded, and the fen was left behind.

Very slow, however, was our progress over the still soft roads, until the hunchback comforted us with the assurance that we had but another three miles before us.

With raised hopes we strained our eyes to catch the first glimpse of the dark irregular line of the houses against the sky. At length a light for a moment flashed a sickly glare, and we all pushed forward with lightened hearts, when our pilot, suddenly turning sharply away again, plunged us into the depths of despair.

On again, riding behind Chin-Tai, I could just make out his pyramidal shape swaying from side to side as he nodded asleep on his tired steed, which turning to nibble a blade of grass nearly upset the rider into the mire. Again we fancied for a moment that we saw the loom of a village, only again to be disappointed.

As those three weary miles lengthened out, I heard Carles sorrowfully call out that our moon was nearly finished, and so it was, for it was setting.

Forward again, till we thought the burden of the Wandering Jew had fallen on us, and that we were condemned to struggle till doomsday.

At length another village; but we dared not lay any flattering unction to our souls, until our hunchback, having turned from the road towards the houses, and from the street into a courtyard, we found ourselves, after a march of thirty-eight miles, at the inn in Urh-Chuang.

There was no news of our mules, although we had despatched them from Pei-T'ang long before we had started ourselves, but the feeling of difficulties overcome, and our haven gained, enabled us to bear the intelligence with equanimity; and though we had no bedding or blankets, we lay down on the kang, and, hard as that was, enjoyed a sound and well-earned sleep.

October 24.—After our adventures of the day before, we were not altogether sorry that the non-arrival of our mules compelled us to halt a day. A messenger whom we had sent to Tien-Tsin arrived with supplies of all kinds; but even fresh bread, and butter in a lordly tin, could not compensate for the absence of the letters and newspapers we had hoped for; and as I took my gun and strolled off to a great swamp close by in the hopes of a duck, Carles pointedly observed,

'Blessed is he who expecteth nothing, for he shall not be disappointed.'

There were plenty of duck and wild-fowl of every kind, but as they remained in the very centre of a shallow lake, even wire cartridges were of no avail, so I turned my steps homewards down-hearted; but as I was wading through the slush I put up a snipe, then another, and another, and I hastened back to get some more suitable ammunition and convey the joyful intelligence to Carles, who quickly joined me, and we had a couple of hours of excellent sport.

Marco Polo says that the Emperor 'starts off southward towards the Ocean Sea, a journey of two days. . . .

'But they are always fowling as they advance. . .

'And all that time he does nothing but go hawking round about among the canebrakes along the lakes and rivers that abound in that region. . . .'[9]

This country around Urh-Chuang is admirably described in the above passage, and I should almost imagine that the Kaan must have set off south-east from Peking, and enjoyed some of his hawking not far from here, before he travelled to Cachar Modun, wherever that may have been.

The mules turned up in the course of the day, and as each successive muleteer narrated the fearful events of the previous night, we should have felt the most profound pity for their sufferings, had not their varied tales brought Falstaff and his men in buckram so forcibly to mind that we said to one another, 'These lies are like the father that begets them, gross as a mountain, open, palpable.'

We found out afterwards that, owing to their vile pronunciation, they had strayed to a wrong village

[9] Marco Polo, vol. i., book ii., chap. xx., 2nd edit., pp. 389, 392.

for the midday halt, where, as we did not appear, they spent the night.

October 25.—Chin-Tai had a violent wrangle with the innkeeper this morning.

Chinese servants as a rule are marvellously quiet in their ways. During meals they move about without a sound, and never rattle the plates, knives, and forks in the manner so dear to the hearts of English waiters; but for their quiet movements they make up by their noisy tongues. Once they begin to wrangle, they shout as if they were drilling a battalion, and if (as usually is the case) the quarrel happens to be about money, Babel itself would be comparatively a tower of silence. But though, from the sounds, it would seem as if they were ready to kill one another, as a rule they mean no harm, and are merely indulging in the pastime that all Chinamen thoroughly enjoy, a good wrangle about money. So great, in fact, is the pleasure they take in this amusement that even the one who gets the worst of the dispute thinks it better than no wrangle at all.

As I strolled about the village before starting, I could hear the shrill voices from the furthest end of the street, and when I returned the discussion was more violent than ever. Ultimately, as Chin-Tai seemed inclined to spend the remainder of the day in this fashion, it became necessary to interpose, and tear him away.

Turning into the innyard to mount our ponies, we found the Ma-Fu apparently chopping at Tom Bowling's head with a gigantic chopper.

The Ma-Fu was a constant source of amusement to us. Nothing seemed to please him better than to have four loose ponies running about, entangling their

legs in their bridles, and kicking at everybody and everything. On coming into the yard of an inn, if he could, he would always leave them loose, and when we did prevail upon him to fasten up one or two, he would always make use of some twine that would scarcely hold a puppy. This was all very well for the quiet ponies that only cared to go to sleep in peace; but it was never a success with Tom Bowling, who was always on the look-out for a chance of playing some trick. On this occasion the Ma-Fu had discovered a piece of rotten cord which he thought would make an excellent headrope, and having fastened it very insecurely to the headstall, we found him cutting off the end of the knot with the gigantic chopper. Of course he was only holding the end at which he was chopping, so that if he had succeeded he would have been like the man who sitting on the bough of a tree sawed it off between himself and the stem.

Once fairly off we heard Chin-Tai recounting aloud to himself all the details of his dispute; and by the way in which he chuckled, and from his evident enjoyment of the recollections, it was tolerably clear that the innkeeper had not worked much to windward of our close sailing attendant.

We gradually left the swampy ground behind, and entered a slightly undulating country, where there were no signs of floods, where the villages were again frequent, and a few people were out ploughing in the fields.

The ploughing of the Chinese is very poor and unscientific. They scarcely do more than scratch the surface of the ground; and, instead of the straight lines so dear to the eye of an English farmer, the

ridges and furrows in China are as crooked as serpents.[1]

We struck the Pei-Ho river at Pei-Tsai-T'sun, where there was no room for us at the inn, and where, as we were obliged to wait about whilst inquiries were being made, a considerable crowd soon collected around us.

The Ma-Fu, for the first time during our acquaintance, showed a faint spark of intelligence, and warned the bystanders of Tom Bowling's queer temper. One man, however, in his eager curiosity, took no heed, and was kicked in consequence. In similar cases the bystanders often attribute the misfortune to the

[1] It is difficult to understand how the Chinese have acquired such a high reputation amongst Europeans for scientific farming. The real secret of their success lies in the care they take that nothing is wasted. They use no other manure than the sewage of the towns, and not one particle of this is lost. Householders sell the produce of their latrines to agriculturists. The sewage is collected from the houses in buckets every few days and carried to the fields. The stench that pervades the courtyard of a Chinese house, and penetrates the inmost recesses of the dwelling is of course abominable.

It is a recognised fact amongst modern sanitarians that sewage is most dangerous when confined in unventilated drains. It is perhaps owing to the non-existence of covered drains that the horrid smells of China seem innocuous. At all events the Chinese do not appear to suffer any ill-effects from their system, which at least has the advantage of simplicity.

The removal of sewage is carried on at all hours, and coolies with buckets of sewage may constantly be seen in the most narrow and crowded thoroughfares during the busiest time of the day.

There is a fable that the Chinese barbers never let the cuttings, or shavings of the hair of their customers fall to the ground, because—so the story runs—they consider anything sacred that comes from the human head. This is pure fiction, and although in some cases the scraps are preserved, they are kept solely that they may be used as manure on some pet plant or patch of cabbage garden.

On the high-roads in China, and especially in the neighbourhood of the great riverside towns, it is no uncommon thing to find dozens of latrines by the roadside, each belonging to some individual who has erected it, not for the sake of decency, but that he may obtain the manure.

foreigner, but here the victim found no sympathy, and was told that he was served quite right.

In this town the Ma-Fu bought a new rope for the red pony, a stiff cable big enough to hold a man-of-war. He made it fast to the headstall with a knot about the size of a bird's nest, and as the poor animal had been endowed by nature with a very large head, he looked extraordinary with this hawser wound round his neck. It was not, however, of the slightest use, for the Ma-Fu still pursued his system of choosing some particularly fragile article to fasten him to.

The Ma-Fu was one of those people who are always trying to do right, but ever succeed in doing wrong. If it happened that he was wanted on the road, he was certain to be a mile behind, and just when his services could not possibly be required, he would dash past us at a gallop, or if there happened to be a particularly dusty spot, would ride in front or to windward of us.

October 26.—There was at first not much change in the aspect of the country, and as I sat at my diary in the evening, after having for about the ninety-ninth time conscientiously recorded the fact that 'the country was well populated and closely cultivated,' the spirit of my old friend Marco seemed sometimes to enter into me, and I almost found myself writing that 'the people were all idolaters and used paper money.'

We were now in the neighbourhood of the Pei-Ho, and the habits and customs of foreigners were not matters of so much interest to the people, but still, as we approached some village, a man at work in his cabbage-garden in the outskirts would spy us, and call out to a friend that some of those queer foreigners were coming. Then, one after another, all the people would come out, followed by the children, the little

ones clinging to the skirts of their fathers' clothes, and the bolder pushing about amongst their elders' legs to get a front place. They would all laugh at our queer eyes; but many would wish us good day, and ask us whence we came, and whither we were going, and a rude word was scarcely ever spoken.

As we marched eastwards we again approached the inundated country, where miles and miles of spoilt crops were still standing in wide expanses of swamp. As the sun was setting, a mist rose from the marshes and wet fields, with promises of miasma and ague for the inhabitants, who nevertheless seemed to be a fine race of men.

The smoke from numerous little fires in the fields, where useless weeds were being burnt, blew across the road, bringing a fragrant perfume from some sweet herb or grass in the flames. As it gradually grew dark, the road became deserted, and we met scarcely anyone but here and there a peasant, who had been later in his field than usual, and was now wending his weary way homewards.

The bull-frogs began to croak in the swamps, and except the hoarse quack of the wild geese as they flew over in long strings, there was no other sound to break the stillness of the quiet night.

Passing several little villages, where great piles of millet-stalks were stacked for the winter fuel, and the sweet scent of the artemisia was borne to us on the evening air, we arrived at the quiet little hamlet of Huang-Chuang, where we halted for the night.

October 27.—A grassy country lay to the east of Huang-Chuang, but in the vicinity of Lin-Ting-Chen the signs of recent inundation were very apparent, and some patches of spoiled millet were still standing. The villages here were all raised above the country,

and surrounded by wet ditches lined with banks of high reeds, and with a punt tied up in some quiet corner. Neat stone bridges spanned these dykes, that often opened into ponds, where some fish-traps were sure to be seen, and perhaps a man groping in the mud.

Lin-Ting-Chen is a large straggling town on the right bank of the river, which is here crossed by two bridges, one a very good stone bridge, with five arches, hardly large enough for the rush of water that must come during the rainy season ; the other, about a quarter of a mile higher up, a small wooden bridge which is probably carried away in floods.

Here we saw a number of the quaint jointed boats in use on this river, of which the bends and twists are so sharp that a long boat cannot be navigated on it.

The people find the most convenient plan is to join two boats together stern to stern. If the wind is fair the boats will sail, but if not they are tracked up by coolies, who tow the boats with a rope fastened to the mast-head.

For a mile or two beyond Lin-Ting-Chen the road was good ; but then we found that, owing to the inundation, it was necessary to ride on the top of the river embankment.

For the last five years the whole of the country in this neighbourhood has been more or less under water, and has not dried up even in spring, which is the driest season. It looked to us as if a great sea lay spread out before us, from which the villages rose like islands. Except on the top of the river embankment communication was altogether stopped, for this year the floods were not deep enough for boat traffic, but still the ground was too soft for carts or animals.

It seems surprising that the people can live, but the Chinese will get something even out of an inun-

dation; and here the swamps are turned into gigantic fish-ponds, where great fat carp are bred, where fish-traps are set at every twenty yards, and where men are seen fishing with nets wherever it is deep enough. Quantities of wild fowl congregate also, and the hoarse qûa-qua of the wild geese, as they flapped heavily overhead, became one of the sounds so frequent that we almost missed it when it stopped.

A steady jog-trot of seventeen miles from Lin-Ting-Chen brought us again to Fêng-T'ai, where we stayed to feed our ponies and inquire about the road.

We tried to get information about the distance to Hsin-An-Chen, but the accounts were most contradictory.

We found out the reason of this afterwards. The fact was that the floods were so extensive that the ordinary roads had ceased to exist, and the people all had different ideas of the extent of the marshes, and of the distance that it was necessary to go round to encompass them. Of one thing they all seemed sure, however, viz. that we must ride along the river embankment to Wo-La-Ku, and then make further inquiries. Our ponies had already travelled for seven hours at a steady jog-trot, but after an hour's rest we were obliged to mount again and keep up the pace.

Although our destination lay nearly due north we were sent off nearly east, and in this direction followed up the river for about eight miles.

There was certainly something mysterious about Hsin-An-Chen; half the people we met had never heard of it; those who had were most wild in their estimate of its distance. They seemed to know nothing of its position, and in answer to our inquiries would stare vacantly, and waving their hands vaguely in a northerly direction, tell us to go due west, when the

road would immediately lead us to the east, and after a twist or two finally settle down into a southerly zig-zag, dodging about amongst the ditches and swamps.

At Chang-Yai-Chuang, we were ferried across another branch of the river, where the boatman comforted us with the assurance that Hsin-An-Chen really had an existence, though of the distance he was not quite sure. Soon afterwards, as it grew dark, we found a guide, and we arrived in safety after having trotted the ponies steadily for upwards of eleven hours.

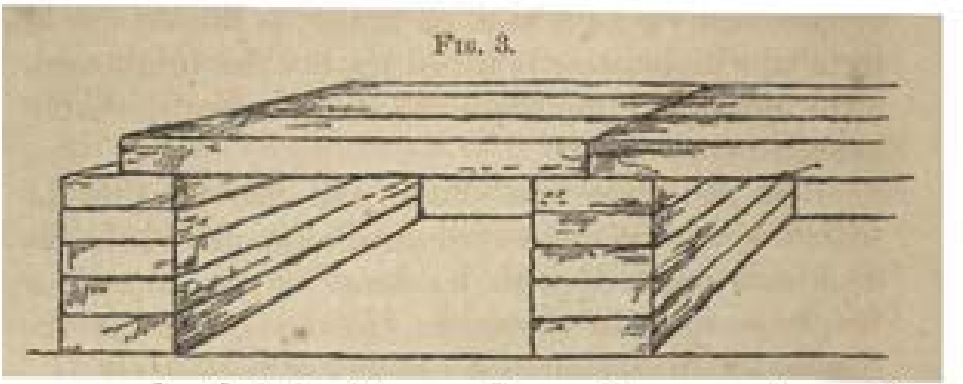
October 28.—At Hsin-An-Chen, the river is about forty yards wide, and there is a floating bridge across it. From this we sent the mules by a direct road to Pao-Ti, and went round ourselves back to Lin-Ting-Chen, where we halted, and after breakfast strolled down to the waterside to see the boatmen, and have a chat over our cigars. But the men were far more anxious to ask us questions about ourselves than to answer any of our interrogations; so we went off again up the left bank of the river, under a fine grove of willow trees, where the road was raised six feet above the country, with ditches at each side. Presently we crossed back to the right bank by one of the bridges so common in this part of the country.

The piers are built of stones laid horizontally one over the other, and the roadway is formed of long stones laid across; some of these stones are twenty feet in length, whilst spans of fifteen feet are by no means uncommon.

Riding through the villages in the middle of the day, when the people were mostly busy in the fields, the children seemed to take little or no notice of us, until some of the bigger boys or men began to

make comments, then the children, thus early discovering their imitative faculties, would follow the

Fig. 3.



example of their elders, and run after us gazing until we were out of sight.

October 29.—There was a great fair going on somewhere in the neighbourhood, and the people we met were dressed in their best clothes; the men with their heads freshly shaved and oiled, and the women shuffling along on their hideous and deformed feet, with a little bit of colouring somewhere about their usually sober dresses.

The coiffure of the women was extravagant, and fastened with pins as big as skewers, whose elaborate and fantastic tops mingled with the artificial flowers that served as decorations for the hair.

They were a hideous set of old hags. But, not devoid of a share of that coquetry which all women have inherited from Eve, they tried to eke out the scant measure of their beauty with some little bit of finery about their clothes.

Then there were the mothers leading their children; the latter in gay-coloured coats, with their queer rudimentary plaits at the sides of the head.

When the boys are very young, the hair on each side of the head behind the temples is formed into two plaits, which stand out like a pair of horns.

When sufficiently long all the hair is combined into one large plait.

The richer people were on mules, or donkeys, or in carts, all with harness polished up, buckles brightened, and little bells round the necks of the animals, looking as smart as possible.

Here and there was a man who had no time for frivolities, and as he rested a minute or two in his work-a-day clothes, with his hand on his plough or hoe, he seemed to throw an envious glance at the happier folk hurrying along to amuse themselves.

Presently we came upon a whole family sitting in their own little patch of cotton, about thirty yards square, busily engaged in picking the cotton from the pods. It would seem impossible that it could pay to grow cotton in such small quantities, but the Chinaman likes doing everything for himself, and if it be but on a trivial scale he thinks that better than joining with others.

We soon left the fair behind us, and in a very unpleasant dust-storm rode on to the west, the road improving as we left the wet country behind. We came again upon the accustomed villages ensconced in groves of willows, where the pert magpies chased one another from branch to branch; further on, the country was quite dry, no crops were left standing, and all the stubble was dug up; plantations of young poplars and willows skirted the road, which took us to within a quarter of a mile of the Pei-Ho river, where thousands of masts could be seen above the river embankment.

As I closed my diary that evening at Tai-Tzŭ-Fu, I could not help regretting that our journey was so near its end. After the weary monotony of a boardship life, the activity of travel had been very delight-

ful; and when I thought over the glorious weather, and the keen crisp mountain air of Mongolia, and called to mind the many beautiful scenes we had passed through, all the petty and trivial discomforts of dirt and inquisitive people began to fade away, and I recollected little but the fine free life, and the pleasant society of the best of companions. But the days were slipping by, and in a short time what a change would come o'er the spirit of the scene! all this country would be bound in an icy grasp; bitter winds would sweep across the unprotected plain; and in thinking of them I could understand why the people planted such thick groves of trees round their villages. It was time our journey came to a close, and if I did not heartily share, I could at least appreciate the high spirits of the servants and muleteers.

October 30.—The distance to Peking was thirty miles, and Carles and I determined that in that city we would breakfast.

There was no difficulty about getting people up this morning; everyone was on the alert, and ready for a start. No need for us to wake ourselves at some fearful hour in the night; long before we wanted to stir, the muleteers and Ma-Fu were busy at work in the courtyard.

No need for us to urge the lazy muleteers to waste no more time in dawdling about before saddling their animals; long before we were ready to give up our boxes and our beds, the men came into the room with restless glances at our open trunks.

The morning was dark, and we had to pick our way carefully for half an hour; but presently the rosy glow of the rising sun lighted up the eastern sky, and we were able to push on to Tung-Chou, where

we crossed the Pei-Ho by a ferry, and rode through the busy town.

We had to look about us in the crowded streets, and to take care of the little strings stretched across the road about eight feet from the ground, to which cotton cloths are tied to protect the shop-fronts from the sun.

Here we were greeted with the familiar smell of the filthy sewer, a smell foul enough to sicken the strongest stomach. I said to Carles, 'How can people live in this fearful stench?' 'How can a man live there?' he replied, pointing to an old-clothes shop, where the merchant was standing sniffing up the fetid odours of the sewer, and the horrid aroma of the foul rags, old clothes, and tattered sheepskins with which his shop was crowded to the very ceiling.

The merchant mistook Carles's motion for a note of admiration, and stepped forward with a bland smile to offer for sale any or all of the contents of his shop; he seemed sorely disappointed when, taking no heed of his offer, we pushed on as well as we could through the teeming crowd in the narrow streets.

We made short work of the eleven and a half miles between the western gate of Tung-Chou and the gate of Peking, and, covering the distance in eighty-nine minutes, we were in time to realise the anticipated enjoyments of a civilised breakfast.

Although the sun was still warm, the weather had suddenly become very cold, and in the evenings, as I sat over the roaring fires kept up in the cheerful European houses, I soon abandoned any regrets at the termination of our pleasant trip.

In Peking, almost the only fuel in use is wood, the cheapest of which comes from America to Shanghai, is transhipped thence to Tien-Tsin, and brought

up to Peking in boats. Even then it is cheaper than coal, which costs from 3*l.* to 4*l.* a ton, although there is enough amongst the mountains to supply the world, and some of it only thirty to forty miles away. But if fuel is expensive, this is compensated for by the cheapness of provisions. Beef is 3*d.*, and mutton 4*d.* a pound, one partridge costs 2*d.*, and a pheasant 3*d.*

The days slipped by very pleasantly in Peking. Men from the bazaars used to bring in great piles of embroidery to tempt the unwary; costly furs of every description used to cover the floor of my room; old curios, and modern shams, bits of bronze worth almost their weight in gold, and marvels of ancient porcelain were displayed in lavish profusion. But better than all were the newspapers and letters. I had not received a letter since leaving Europe, as I had travelled from Marseilles to Peking with one mail, and had left the northern capital before the arrival of the next.

A morning was spent in those quaint dark shops in the by-streets of Peking, and an afternoon in one of the regular fairs.

This was an amusing sight, and very like a European fair. There are stalls where every description of cheap trifles is sold, and nothing expensive is to be found. Children's toys, dolls, clay models of spiders, grasshoppers, and all sorts of insects; groups of men, women, and children, cleverly modelled in clay, and highly characteristic; ribbons and bits of finery for the women, pipes and chopsticks for the men. Then there are the eating-stalls, where divers savoury dishes are prepared, and the hot-potato men and the sweetmeat-sellers offer their attractive goods. Pigeons too are sold in great numbers, for the Chinese are great pigeon-fanciers. And in every

corner there is a surging crowd of people, laughing, pushing, buying, or selling; the sellers calling out the virtue of their wares, and begging people to come and buy; the purchasers bargaining, and chaffering, and all enjoying themselves thoroughly.

One evening we had a Chinese dinner in the most famous of the Peking restaurants, the 'Restaurant of Virtue and Prosperity.'

I shall not attempt to describe a Chinese dinner, for although the subject may be of a nature to present some amusing details for a European, yet, as the humorous Abbé observes: 'These details are so well known that we should fear to abuse the patience of the reader. We have besides remarked in the *Mélanges Posthumes* of Abel-Rémusat, the following passage, which would quite suffice to dissipate the idea, if ever it possessed us, of giving a nomenclature of the dishes which were served to us:

'"Some years ago, on the return of a European embassy from China, where the officers composing it had not found much to boast of in the success of their mission, it came into their heads to offer to the readers of the Gazette an account of a dinner that had been given them, they said, by the officials of some frontier town. According to their account never had guests been more sumptuously regaled; the quality of the dishes, the number of courses, the play-acting during the intervals, all had been carefully arranged, and furnished a magnificent example.

'"To those who were in the habit of reading old books there seemed something familiar in the account of that dinner. More than one hundred years before the time of these officers, certain Jesuit missionaries had partaken of precisely the same repast, composed of exactly the same dishes, and served in the same style.

But there are many people for whom everything is new, and although it is certain, '*qu'un dîner réchauffé ne valut jamais rien*,' this *réchauffé* at all events was found excellent, and the public, always greedy for peculiarities of customs, and even for the details of cookery, did not trouble itself as to who had been the real diners. It was pleased with the singularities of the Chinese service, as well as with the gravity with which the guests, in eating rice, executed manœuvres and evolutions which would have done honour to the best drilled regiment of infantry."'[2]

If now I should present our bill of fare I should be suspected of having dined with, or of plagiarising, Mrs. Brassey!

Gelatine is the foundation of every delicacy that forms part of a high-class Chinese dinner. Swallow's-nest soup, shark's fins, sea-slugs, and sea-weed are nearly pure gelatine. For flavour, the Chinese seem to know but duck and pork; and the succession of gelatinous foods, flavoured the first with duck, and the next with pork, is tedious in the extreme.

European wines are utterly out of place with a Chinese dinner, and even the most conservative Englishman will find that hot rice-wine, with a bouquet of rose-water, sipped from cups not much larger than thimbles, is preferable to the driest vintage of Heidsick, or the rarest *cuvée* of Lafitte.

A European generally finds the first Chinese dinner he eats very good, the second indifferent, and the third nasty.

The restaurant-keepers at Peking, Shanghai, and Macao doubtless invent fantastic dishes utterly unknown to an ordinary Chinaman, in order to satisfy the well-known English love of the marvellous. At

[2] Huc, *L'Empire Chinois*, vol. i. chap. 5.

all events, it would be as fair to judge of an English household dinner from a Greenwich feast, as it would be to consider one of these made-up and elaborate entertainments a type of a Chinese gentleman's usual meal.

But even of that, as well as of the diversified and lengthy repasts served up in these restaurants, visited at intervals by curious Europeans, it may be said with tenfold the force with which the remarks may be applied to a Greenwich banquet, that 'the appetite is distracted by the variety of objects, and tantalised by the restlessness of perpetual solicitation, not a moment of repose, no pause for enjoyment; eventually a feeling of satiety without satisfaction, and of repletion without sustenance; till at night, gradually recovering from the whirl of the anomalous repast, famished yet incapable of flavour, the tortured memory can only recall with an effort that it has dined off'[3] gelatine and grease!

I have heard it said that the Chinese use paper pocket-handkerchiefs. This, however, is not the case, but the idea may have originated in the little squares of paper that are laid beside each diner, and are used for wiping the chopsticks after partaking of any dish; for one pair of chopsticks must serve for the whole dinner.

November 6.—Sir Thomas Wade left Peking in the afternoon, and to say that everyone regretted him is to convey but a faint idea of the blank his absence caused in Peking society. His hospitality and liberality were unbounded, and the regrets that his departure gave rise to will only cease on his return.

At the gateway of the Confucian Temple at Peking there are some stone drums, as they are called, for the

[3] Coningsby.

Chinese have no other word for cylinder. These drums were discovered somewhere about the year 600 A.D. lying half buried in the ground in the department Fêng-Hsiang-Fu, in the province of Shensi; they are supposed to have been inscribed between B.C. 827 and B.C. 782. The locality in which they were discovered was a portion of the ancestral territory of the founder of the Chou dynasty. Tan-Fu (B.C. 1325), afterwards styled T'ai-Wang in the sacrificial ritual of the dynasty, removed to the foot of Mount Ch'i in the present district of Ch'i-Shan in the department now called Fêng-Hsiang. Subsequently, after the establishment of the Chou dynasty by his descendants, the south of Mount Ch'i would appear to have been a favourite resort of the imperial hunting expeditions; and it is supposed that these stones were erected in commemoration of one of them. Originally large water-worn boulders, they were roughly chiselled into their present cylindrical shape, and were removed to the Confucian Temple of Fêng-Hsiang-Fu, where they remained till the end of the T'ang dynasty (A.D. 937), but were again dispersed and lost from sight during the wars and troubles of the five dynasties. Under the Sung dynasty literature again flourished, and Ssŭ-Ma-Ch'ih, prefect of Fêng-Hsiang-Fu, collected and found nine out of the ten drums, and placed them in the gateway of the Imperial College. The missing one was discovered A.D. 1052, and thus they were again complete.

When the Khitan, or Liao Tartars, invaded Northern China, the Sung Court fled south, taking with them the drums, which were set up in Pien-Ching (now K'ai-Fung-Fu, in Honan) their new capital (A.D. 1108). A decree was passed at this period ordering the characters to be filled with gold to

preserve them. In 1126 the Kin, or Niuchih Tartars, captured the city and took the drums to Peking, the gold was dug out from the characters, and the drums were more or less neglected until 1307, when they were placed in the gateway of the Temple of Confucius, where they now are. ('Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,' new series, No. viii. Shanghai, 1874.)

November 7. — At about half-past eight this morning, a riding party assembled for early breakfast before a visit to the Summer Palace. A cart with luncheon had been already sent off very early, and starting ourselves at half-past nine we reached the building by eleven.

The ruins of the Summer Palace, though very beautiful, are very sad. One seems to be brought here face to face with the wreck of an empire. The builders of this palace seem to have been imbued with something of the spirit of those who in the middle ages raised in Europe such noble monuments of their devotion and piety. The whole soul of a man must have been in the work; no part was neglected, no money, time, or labour spared; infinite care was bestowed on every detail, and notwithstanding the desolations and ruin, there still seems to breathe over all the spirit of a master mind. Roaming about the palaces now overgrown with weeds, or looking out on that still lake whose mirror-like surface must have reflected so many and such curious sights, one cannot help feeling that the architect must have had a faith in something, even if it were only in the possibility of complete human happiness.

In the Wang-Tua-Shan enclosure there are now only two buildings left standing; one a beautiful little pagoda of red, yellow, green, and blue tiles;

the other a temple in the same style at the top of the hill. Both were originally covered with porcelain figures of Buddha; but now the heads have been chipped off from all within reach, and in some places there are great cavities where people have been trying to extract whole tiles. It is very humiliating to see the greedy way in which Europeans chip off the figures that in their mutilated state can be of no possible utility, and are not by themselves in any way ornamental.

Surely the Chinaman cracking his water-melon seeds is at least as dignified as the wandering European desecrating shrines with his vulgar name, or destroying beautiful monuments, for the sake of glorifying himself in the eyes of his gaping country cousins, by the exhibition of a tile, or the head of a Buddha!

Here, too, it would seem to be unnecessary to carry any further the cruel work of demolition, for, by groping in the heaps of rubbish that litter the place, amongst dust and stones and broken tiles, our party found plenty of relics, some of which, terra-cotta tiles with raised figures of Buddha on one side and an inscription in three languages on the other, were at least as valuable curios as bits knocked off a building.

The parks, in which the palaces stand, inclose many acres, interspersed with hills, some real and some artificial, looking over lovely lakes, where there are inlets spanned by elegant arched bridges. Standing on the crest of the highest of these hills, the barrier of the mountains that buttress the Mongolian plateau is seen to the north, whilst to the south the eye roams over the wide and rich alluvial plain, dotted with villages and trees, the walls of Peking

in the distance showing sharp and clear through that crisp, dry, frosty air.

Here there were no noisy tourists to disturb reflection; no gabbling cicerone with his automatic tongue; and mournful though it must be to think of what has been and what now is, it is with difficulty that at length one tears oneself away from the scene, at once so fair and sad.

The last emperor ordered the palaces to be rebuilt. The ministers scraped together a small sum of money, and began to mend the roads and repair the walls; but the emperor dying soon afterwards the works were stopped.

On our way home we visited the 'Bell Temple,' where there is a bronze bell, eleven feet in diameter, fourteen and a half feet high, and about four inches thick. It is said to be the largest bell in the world that is hung. From rough measurements I calculated the amount of bronze in it at 300 cubic feet; this would make its weight about 160,000 lbs.

The bell is covered, inside and out, with Chinese characters, all of which are close together, and none more than half an inch long. It is said that the characters were cast on the bell, but this seems almost impossible. The whole inscription is a prayer for rain; and during a drought the princes and chief ministers come to this temple and pray for rain, remaining on their knees until the prayers are answered, a duty which they perform much as the emperor does his at the Temple of Heaven.

It is said that the tones of the bell are supernatural, and have the power of bringing rain. This superstition in all probability rests on a substratum of fact, for the vibrations of this mass of metal may cause the precipitation of rain from an overcharged

cloud, just as the report of a cannon will sometimes bring on a threatening shower.

The largest bell in the world is that of Moscow, but this still rests on the ground, and has never been hung. It is nineteen feet high, with a circumference of sixty-three feet eleven inches at the rim, and its weight is computed at 443,772 lbs. Bells are usually cast with approximately the same proportions; a bell of the same shape and proportions as the Moscow bell, with the height of the Peking bell, would weigh 177,534 lbs. My rough calculation, as just stated, makes it 160,000 lbs., and it is not likely to be less.

What is Peking like? was a question that I knew I should often be asked on my return to England, and I determined that I would, if possible, be able to answer it; but the more I saw, the more hopeless seemed the task. I took a note-book out one day to try and write down what there was to be seen, but, as I began the task, I was nearly knocked down by a camel lumbering along with a load of brick tea.

I remarked to a friend, an old resident, that nothing but a series of coloured pictures or photographs could ever give an idea of Peking as it is: 'No,' he replied, 'and even then you would not get the stinks.'

There are still, as in old Marco's time, the streets so straight and wide, and the plots of ground, on which the houses are built, are still four-square; there are many open spaces inside the walls, large gardens, and trees; but its grandeur seems to be gone, and if the old Venetian were now to return the only part of his description that he would still adhere to would be that 'it is impossible to give a description that should do it justice.'

There are still extensive remains of drains, but their place has long been taken by open sewers in some of

the streets. The smells that pervade the city at all seasons of the year are abominable, and the black dust that sweeps in clouds about the streets is probably the most filthy in the world, not excepting even that of London. In dry weather, this dust lies deep in all the streets, and in wet it is turned to a horrible black mire.

From the walls of the city, near the Observatory, a fine view is obtained over Peking, with the examination hall just below. The examinations, at which 13,000 candidates had presented themselves, were just over.

The public examinations are one of the most remarkable institutions in the country. In every city hundreds and thousands of candidates present themselves yearly to pass for their degree. Each is shut up in a cell, about five feet square, which he cannot leave for two days. He is then liberated for a day, and again shut up with a fresh paper of questions.

Very little bribery and personification takes place at these examinations, but amid the universal corruption that prevails throughout the Chinese administration, it would be quite impossible entirely to avoid unjust dealings.

A story is told that on a certain occasion the examiners of some provincial capital were dining with a high military official; and during the dinner a letter was handed to one of the former. By Chinese etiquette a person receiving a letter in company must hand it to the host if he asks to see it. On this occasion the military man requested permission to look over the document; this was at first refused, but the demand, repeated in a peremptory manner, was eventually complied with.

The letter was from the father of the examiner,

saying that he had received a large sum of money from a certain person who intended to be a candidate at the next examination.

The military official read the letter, and called out to his servant, 'Bring the chaff-cutter.' The instrument was produced; and the officer put the examiner to death with his own hands, cutting him across the belly, this being the legal punishment for an examiner convicted of malpractices.

The officer immediately wrote to Peking, demanding a legal punishment for his crime, but he received for answer that his conduct had been exemplary.

November 8.—Winter was approaching, and speculation was now rife as to when the Tien-Tsin river would close, for during the winter it is fast frozen up, and the cold is so bitter that the ships lying at Tien-Tsin are roofed over, to protect the sailors from the severity of the climate, which seems, except for a few short weeks, to know no moderation.

It was time for me to leave, unless I wished to run the risk of being kept through the winter, with the choice of making a long tedious, cold, and miserable land-journey from Peking southwards.

Chin-Tai was told to hire carts, and make preparations for going to Tien-Tsin; but owing to the fact that the examinations were just over, it was very difficult to find them. Chin-Tai came in mournfully, and said there were plenty of carts that would take me to Shan-Hai-Kuan, and he spoke in such a reproachful way that I really felt as if I ought to suggest going there instead. Perseverance was, however, at length rewarded, and I began my return journey on November 9, and halted for breakfast in the familiar inn where the cockroach had come out of his crack in the table to look at me, six weeks before.

November 9.—My poor grey was none the better for the last four weeks' travelling; the hard work had made him a little shaky about the legs, and in the dark, as we were trotting to Ho-Se-Wu over some rough ground, he came down, and before I could clear myself he dragged me across the road. The stirrup leather fortunately came out, but now we had a hunt for it, and for my hat, which, though a white one, could not be seen in the pitchy darkness. An old donkey-man coming along assisted in the search, and, apparently being possessed of cat's eyes, he found both the lost articles. I told him I would treat him to a supper at Ho-Se-Wu, but finding he was not bound for that place, I gave him a few cash instead, and sent him on his way rejoicing.

Riding on, Chin-Tai began to sing and shout in the most exuberant spirits, and then asked me what I should like for dinner. I answered that as the carts were miles behind, and there were no cooking utensils, I was not prepared to be very particular.

He was silent for a moment, evidently thinking what he could do without an enormous saucepan, big enough to broil a turkey in, that he had insisted on buying at Tien-Tsin. He soon solved the problem, and bursting into another refrain, promised me soup for the first course, and asked what I should like next. I allowed him to revolve in his mind the extraordinary culinary feats that he was proposing for himself, when with a pæan of triumph he declared he could cook a beefsteak, and that he had a bottle of claret in the breast of his coat. I joined in his hilarity, and with light hearts we rode into the inn at Ho-Se-Wu.

Here I had a not altogether satisfactory experience of the Chinese institution of the kang.

When properly made, properly lighted, and properly

attended to, there can be nothing better for warming purposes than a properly constructed kang, but when the door of the fireplace is inside, instead of outside, this imperfection very soon discovers itself, for the smoke, as perverse as smoke usually is, persists in coming into the room in dense volumes.

In compliance with my demand a man came in with some shavings and a bundle of millet stalks. The first were lighted and the ends of some of the latter were held in the flames. As they burnt away the man kept pushing them in until they were consumed. He then took fresh ones, and so on, until the whole bundle had disappeared, a consummation that arrived in about half an hour without perceptibly affecting the warmth of the apartment. But the man was too lazy to do anything more, and putting his hand on the kang, smiled blandly, as much as to say 'How nice and warm it is now.' As a matter of fact, the most delicate thermometer that ever left the establishment of Mr. Casella would have failed to show a rise of temperature, but it was not worth while trying to make the people light the fire properly, as the operation would have taken a long time, and they had evidently made up their minds not to be bothered with it, so I professed satisfaction, and let the man go.

When a kang is thoroughly in use the fire never goes out altogether; the glowing embers remain, and the air inside, once the large mass is thoroughly heated, does not cool for many hours.

The kang itself, too, a mass of clay or brickwork, retains its warmth for a long time, but after having been out of use it is not possible to light it at once and warm up a room immediately.

November 10.—It was still dark when we started the next morning, and there was now a sharp frost,

so after clearing the town I dismounted, until a smart double of about two miles, together with the rays of the rising sun, sent the blood tingling through my veins.

We halted for a couple of hours at Yang-Tsun, and leaving this at 12.30, rode the fifteen miles to the bridge of boats outside Tien-Tsin in exactly two hours. From this point we threaded our way leisurely through the crowded streets to the hotel in the European settlement.

A steamer was not going to start for Shanghai for some days, and I passed the interval very pleasantly amongst the hospitable Europeans, breakfasting on the French gunboat, or lunching with the officers of the English one. Tien-Tsin races occupied one day, and another was spent in coursing. Newspapers and letters filled up any odd corners in the afternoons, and the evenings were never very long.

Tien-Tsin in the winter is a glorious place for the man-of-war sailor, whether he be English or French. There can be no other harbour in the world where English sailors live so well and so cheaply. The officers used to complain that the men became so fat that they could do nothing. A sailor was seen one day to buy forty-six teal for a dollar (about 1*d*. a piece); geese, duck, and quail are all sold at proportionate prices.

By November 16 I had made the few necessary preparations for departure, and disposed of my ponies; and in the evening of that day, after dinner, embarked with the rest of my property on board the steamer 'Pao-Ting.'

November 17.—An American gentleman and his wife were the only other passengers. We left Tien-Tsin very early, and when I came up on deck we

were already some distance down the river. The morning was still frosty, but there was a brilliant sun, and a walk up and down the deck was thoroughly enjoyable.

The 'Pao-Ting' did not stick on the mud quite so often as the good ship 'Chih-Li' had done on my upward voyage, but there was quite enough grounding and bumping to try the temper of the good-natured captain.

On this occasion Taku bar presented no difficulties, and at two o'clock we steamed towards Chi-Fu across the gulf of Pe-Chi-Li.

November 18.—When I ventured my head outside the companion, the ship was rolling heavily, and I found that snow was falling, so I retreated again to the cabin until we reached Chi-Fu, where we anchored at nine o'clock. The swell setting into the harbour made us roll so much that even here we were obliged to keep the fiddles on the dining table, and later in the day it was necessary to move across to a more quiet berth to finish coaling. This operation was rather a lengthy one, and it was not till nine o'clock in the evening that we were again under way.

November 19 *and* 20.—The ship rolled about all day in a heavy cross sea; but during the next night a change of course, or of wind, brought her head to the waves, and she was a good deal steadier. As we steamed southward we gradually left the stormy seas and entered a more peaceful region, where the sun came out and a gentle south-west breeze warmed the air; and on November 21, at 8.30 in the morning, we moored off the wharf at Shanghai.

CHAPTER IV.

A CYCLE OF CATHAY.

Cradle of the Chinese Nation—Their Settlement in Shan-Si—Characteristics of Chinese History—Manifold Invasions of China, but Chinese Individuality always predominates—Imagination essential to Advancement, but the Chinese have it not—Inventions ascribed to Them—Stoppage of Development—China for the Chinese—Foreign Help Inevitable—The Woo-Sung Railway—Defects of Chinese Character—Shanghai in Winter—Pigeon-English—Perverse Employment of it—The word 'Pagoda'—Preparations again for Travel—Detail of Packages—The Shanghai Theatre—Chinese Treatment of Chinese—The Chinese Performers—Sport at Shanghai—A Shooting Excursion on the Yang-Tzŭ—Names of the Great River—The so-called 'Grand Canal,' and its Humours—Shooting Scenes—The Mixt Court at Shanghai—The Yang-Tzŭ Steamers—Additions to our Following.

THE birthplace of the Chinese nation is veiled in mystery. Mr. Douglas, in an exceedingly interesting article in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' observes: 'Some believe that their point of departure was in the region to the south-east of the Caspian Sea, and that, having crossed the head waters of the Oxus, they made their way eastward along the southern slopes of the Teen Shan. But, however this may be, it is plain that as they journeyed they struck on the northern course of the Yellow River, and that they followed its stream on the eastern bank, as it trended south, as far as Tung-Kwan, and that then, turning with it due eastward, they established small colonies on the fertile plains of the modern province of Shan-se.'

Mr. Douglas also states that the nucleus of the

nation 'was a little horde of wanderers roving amongst the forests of Shan-se without homes, without clothing, without fire to dress their victuals, and subsisting on the spoils of the chase eked out with roots and insects.'

There were aborigines already here; but of them little is known; their remnants are said to exist at the present day amongst the Miau-Tzŭ of Kwei-Chou.

But the Chinese were the better race; they were also apparently already agriculturists, and as such in a higher state of civilisation. One result could but follow; the inexorable law of nature had its way; the inferior and less civilised race were pushed out by degrees, just as all the barbarous tribes still remaining are surely disappearing before the steady advance of the Chinese; as the New Zealand Maories and American Red Indians are dying away before the Anglo-Saxon race.[4] There is no record that the Chinese were ever a pastoral people, excepting that which lingers in some of the ancient characters of the language, and, as some say, in the wavy outlines of their roofs. However that may have been, they appear to have settled down as agriculturists in Lower Shan-Si.

Northern China had not yet been denuded of her forests; but though the climate may have been more favourable for agricultural pursuits than in the present day, the province of Shan-Si can never have been one that yielded a profusion of wealth without the steady application of labour.

Baron Richthofen remarks that 'the altitude of

[4] It will not do to argue from this analogy that so will the barbarians of Central Asia disappear before the European. The Anglo-Saxon cannot colonise there; if the Russians can, they have indeed a grand future before them.

its arable ground renders nearly the whole of it unfit for raising two crops a year.'

Neither is the climate so severe that labour in the fields cannot be carried on at all seasons.

The Chinese race, therefore, in its infancy found itself in a country where steady labour and thrift were necessary for life; and here were perhaps the germs of the industry and exceeding carefulness so remarkable in the character of the Chinese of the present day.

Further, this was the order of things most suited for the production of a sentiment of equality amongst the people, for food was not too easily procured, and a sharp division between rich and poor would not immediately ensue. It is, therefore, not surprising that a strong democratic feeling should be another feature of the Chinese as they are.[5]

The dim history of those days throws but a feeble ray of light, but it shows us that civilisation advanced, and the existence of trade is proved by the establishment of fairs.[6]

The people now spread eastward, and in 2300 B.C. we find their capital in the neighbouring province of Shan-Tung, and their kingdom extending to the north and east of the present Peking, and as far south as latitude 23° N.[7]

But the southern climate seemed to soften the hardy northmen, and the varied conditions of life to destroy their cohesiveness. . . . We read of a

[5] In China all judicial affairs are conducted more or less in public. Even in the presence of the highest officials anyone can turn in from the street to see what is going on, no one trying to hinder him. A beggar will sit down and smoke his pipe in the presence of a magistrate, and sometimes join in the conversation unasked. The literary examinations are open to all; no matter how lowly a man may be if he can pass his examination he may become the highest magistrate in the land.

[6] *Encyclopædia Britannica.* [7] *Ibid.*

ruler in 1818 B.C. in whom were combined the worst vices of kings ;[8] but the vitality of the people was still sufficient to make them rise against him and sweep away all traces of him and his dynasty.[9]

During the next eight hundred years we hear of little but internecine wars and consequent weakening of the kingdom.

Nigh two thousand years had elapsed since first the black-haired race had come from the north-west ; three sovereign dynasties had reigned, of which the last was sinking amid the rivalry of feudal states, and China seemed rapidly disintegrating, when the Princes of Thsin, a state founded five centuries before with their capital at Chang-Gan in Shen-Si, conquering in succession the six or seven other states, restored (B.C. 251) a strong central power.

With the accession of new blood, China was reinvigorated, and this was one of the most flourishing epochs in the varied history of this marvellous empire: roads were made, canals were dug; and before long the powerful desert horde of the Hiung-Nu, who had long harassed the Chinese, were completely routed and driven into Mongolia ; and in the year 214 B.C. the Great Wall was commenced as a protection against the inroads of these barbarians. The veneration of antiquity preached by Confucius now seems first to take root, for at this time 'schoolmen and pedants were for ever holding up to the admiration of the people the heroes of the feudal times.'[1]

This reverence for antiquity throughout the ages that follow, amidst scenes of strife and disorder, as well as during the intervals of prosperity, sank deeper and deeper into the nature of the Chinese, and in it

[8] *Encyclopædia Britannica.* [9] *Ibid.* [1] *Ibid.*

is to be found one of the causes of the present decadence of the nation.

History now repeats itself again and again with almost wearisome monotony; tumults and disorders, and the consequent weakness of the people invite assaults from the north, but time after time the vanquished Chinese seem only reinvigorated by their invaders, and we find that each fresh incursion is followed by a period of glory.

In 121 B.C. the Hiung-Nu were driven to the north-east of the Caspian; then succeeded the troublous time of the 'Three Kingdoms'; and in the fourth and fifth centuries of our era the Wei, a race of Siberian nomads, conquered and ruled in Northern China; but in the seventh century arose the Thang, the most glorious of all the native dynasties; under them Chinese rule extended to Turfan, Khoten, Kashgar, and even to the Jaxartes, whilst Chinese fame was so great that ambassadors came from the Caliphate, and even from Imperial Byzantium.

Thus the marvellous vitality of the Chinese disposed of successive races of invaders, either driving them far from their borders, or absorbing them and assimilating them when they could not be expelled.

But yet another army of barbarians appeared in the Khitans. These, however, never extended their rule very far south, although in 997 A.D. tribute was paid to them. Later, the Chinese invited a fourth horde, the Kin or Niu-Chih, to expel the Khitans. The Kin succeeded in this only too well, and in 1150 A.D. established themselves in the whole country north of the Yang-Tzŭ.

A new race, the Mongols, now came on the scene; they wrested province after province from the Kin, and the place of these knew them no more. This was in

the thirteenth century, and in the brilliant light that radiated from these the most successful, the most glorious of all the conquerors of China, the feeble glimmer of Kin and Khitan was extinguished alike. This was the most celebrated era in the whole history of the Chinese Empire; but it was the Mongols, and not the Chinese who made it so.

The latter were known to Marco Polo as the people of Manzi, who, if they 'had but the spirit of soldiers, would conquer the world; but they are (quoth he) no soldiers at all, only accomplished traders and skilful craftsmen';[2] whilst Friar Odoric says: 'All the people of this country are traders and artificers.'[3]

True, both Polo and Odoric speak in glowing terms of the rich and noble cities of Manzi, of their wealth, magnificence, and luxury, but these were as nothing before the glories of the Great Kaan, whose subjects they were, and who was a Mongol. But the Mongol power waned, and by a turn in the wheel of fate the son of a Chinese labourer drove out the successor of Kublai. In more recent days, to quell rebellions in the south, the Chinese invited the aid of the Manchu Tartars, who now are seated on the Imperial throne.

Thus, through long ages of varied fortunes, the Chinese character has been formed; and it would be surprising indeed, if a nation that had survived so many and such great vicissitudes, had been conquered many times, and had each time risen superior to defeat, had absorbed one race of victors and driven out another, did not possess some characteristic that would mark it as a peculiar people—and this characteristic is the individuality of the race. It is, indeed, a matter

[2] Marco Polo, book ii., vol. ii., p. 166.
[3] Cathay, vol. i., p. 105.

for wonder that a people so numerous and covering so vast an area should everywhere appear the same; who, whether they are found in the north, the south, the east, or the west of their own huge empire, who, whether they are observed as coolies in America or Australia, or met as ambassadors in London or St. Petersburg, should universally possess the same thoughts and the same feelings, wear the same clothes, and eat the same food, should be imbued with the same habits of intense industry and thrift, and should act precisely in the same manner as they did many hundreds of years ago.

Where else in the history of the world can we read of three hundred millions of people thus amazingly unchangeable? and who can doubt that they must yet remain for many centuries an important factor in the Asian problem?

Of all qualities that conduce to the advancement of a people, imagination is perhaps the most important; without it a nation must remain stagnant, with it the limits of its forward march can never be reached.

No matter what branch of industry or science is examined imagination lies at the root of its advance.

Surely it was in one of the most mighty flights of imagination that the keen gaze of Newton, sweeping across the wild chaotic waves of theory that each in turn must have leapt up towards his searching intellect, singled out the exquisitely beautiful and simple one of gravitation to account for the most complex motions of the vast masses that roll through space.

What but the richest imagination could have enabled Darwin to conceive the descent of man? or how could Professor Owen without imagination have

built up from some paltry fragment the form of a gigantic mammal ?

Who without imagination could from mere scratches on a rock have enunciated the theory of a glacial epoch ? or how, without imagination, could the present marvels of electricity have been evolved from the twitching of the muscles of a frog ?

Of art it is hardly necessary to speak ; no one can ever have attributed a want of imagination to either painters or poets worthy of the name.

Imagination and originality are more or less inseparable ; an individual devoid of one will certainly be deficient of the other, and what is true of an individual will equally hold good of a nation.

In the Chinese character originality and imagination are conspicuous by their absence. The Chinaman is eminently a matter-of-fact person ; sights that would be disgusting to a European have nothing unpleasant in his eyes, for everything is looked at from a utilitarian point of view. The beauties of nature have no charms for him, and in the most lovely scenery the houses are so placed that no enjoyment can be derived from it. If the unhewn log of a tree will serve as a beam in the wall, he does not think it worth while to spend money or labour in squaring it. A Chinaman may express the highest admiration for a pair of European candles, but if they cost a trifle more than his filthy oil lamp, he will rarely exchange the glimmer of his time-honoured institution for the brilliant light of a composite. A Chinaman will feel the texture of a European coat, and admit its superiority, but his first question will be, how much did it cost? In their pictures there is no imagination ; they draw birds and insects as they see them, and really well. Animals also they attempt, but

their ignorance of anatomy renders their efforts in this direction ridiculous; but abstract ideas, such as have made the memory of old European painters glorious, any attempt to portray, Faith, Hope, or Charity, any effort to rise above the level of every-day life, are things unknown in Chinese art. So in their sculpture, they represent men, women, and children as they see them, but that is all; they can imitate admirably, but they can imagine nothing. Their want of imagination precludes almost all idea of badinage. On one occasion, when the door of an inn was blocked up by inquisitive people, it was agreed that as long as they kept outside, the door should remain open. At length a boy ventured to put his feet over the door-sill.

'I suppose you think those are very fine boots of yours,' was the foreigner's sarcastic remark.

'Yes,' replied the youth, 'they cost half a tael.'

The idea of being chaffed never entered into his matter-of-fact mind.

Thus at almost every turn the want of imagination, and with it the absence of originality are evident.

But the Chinese are credited with having invented almost everything: how can this be reconciled with a want of originality?

In the first place there are a good many things that the Chinese have never invented or discovered. The principle of the pump, the circulation of the blood, and the science of grafting are still unknown to the Chinese. It has frequently been asserted that they invented gunpowder; but the late Mr. Mayers, Chinese Secretary of Legation at Peking, has effectually demolished their claim to this invention.[4]

[4] Morrison gives 1275 as the time of the invention of powder and

The word 'P'ao' which now means 'cannon' was, it was asserted, found in old Chinese books of a date anterior to that in which gunpowder was first known to Europeans; hence the deduction was drawn that the Chinese were acquainted with gunpowder before it was used in the West. But close examination shows that in all old books the radical of the character 'P'ao' means 'stone,' but that in modern books the radical of the character 'P'ao' means 'fire'; that the character with the radical 'fire' only appears in books well known to have been written since the introduction of gunpowder into the West; and that the old character 'P'ao' in reality means 'Balista.'

So the word 'Chiang' means 'spear,' but the radical of the written character means 'wood'; the same word 'Chiang' means 'musket,' but the radical of the latter means 'metal.' [5]

Parallel cases are not wanting in other languages. 'Banduk' is the Hindustani word for 'musket'; yet we read in Marco Polo of Bendocquedar, the 'Soldan of Babylon,' a name which, as Colonel Yule points out, is *Bandukdar*, the Arblasteer.

Long before the invention of gunpowder, 'musket' was the old English word for a hawk used in the chase; when firearms were adopted for the same purpose, the name was handed on.

The mariner's compass, it is said, was known to the Chinese at a very early date; and it must be admitted that the early use of bank-notes, and the knowledge of printing, give the Chinese some claim to originality in ancient days.

It would be a deeply interesting study, and one

guns, and was aware that what they called 'P'ao' were machines for throwing stones.

[5] Mr. Baber was the first to notice this last fact.

well-worthy of the labour, for anyone with sufficient acquaintance with the written language of China to investigate the ancient books, and from their internal evidence, and not from the prejudiced and superficial views of foreigners, to ascertain the history of the formation of Chinese character. It would appear, however, that originality, if they ever possessed it, has been stamped out, partly by the insane teachings of Confucius that everything ancient is sacred, and the still more insane idea that anything new, no matter what, is dangerous. Another cause for the disappearance of originality may be found in the preposterous system of examinations. Magisterial and official posts are awarded only to those who can pass the literary examinations; and until the examiners have been satisfied, no man, no matter what his rank or position may be, can hold any official position whatever; the 'literati,' or those who have passed high examinations, are the class most highly esteemed in China, and the desire to be numbered amongst them is almost universal. And what are these examinations? Examination only in the ancient classics, the obscure passages in which must only be explained in the orthodox manner.[6]

It is not difficult thus to realise that the Chinese character may have changed during the last few centuries, and that the originality and power of conception they may have possessed may have been crushed out by the worship of antiquity and the system of examination.

If this be so, the extraordinary stoppage of the early development of the people may be accounted for; for without originality, and devoid of imagina-

[6] See later under *May* 6.

tion, they must necessarily have stagnated, and have been arrested in the onward march towards a more perfect civilisation.[7]

Another feature in the Chinese character that may have assisted in some degree to retard their development is the intense desire of every man to do everything for himself. It is undoubtedly prompted by a sturdy feeling of independence, but carried to the excess in which it is seen in the Chinese it must be hurtful.

A Chinaman, if he can, will grow his own grain, grind it, or husk it, and cook it on his own premises. If possible, he will cultivate his little bit of cotton, and weave the cloth without assistance from beyond his household; all his clothes are perhaps made by his wife or family; and thus he is almost independent of any extraneous aid. We in Europe know that this is not an economical way of doing things; but the Chinese have done so for generations,—and

[7] Another reason for the stagnation of the Chinese people may be possibly found in the fact that all the talent of the country is absorbed in the service of the State. This is partly because of the contempt in which the non-official class is held, and partly because there is no entrance to official life of any kind except by competitive examination. Now, even in progressive countries, a system which would divert from private enterprise all those who help to make the country great, would have lamentable results. How much more must this be the case in one where enterprise of any kind is almost unknown, and which has, as it were, been asleep for centuries. In Western States, honour, fame, and dignities attend those who succeed, no matter in what walk of life; but in China none but the officials can hope for any of these.

If we look back at the history of our civilisation we find that all the great strides in science, and nearly all the greatest works of literature and art, have been due to private individuals. The discovery of America, the establishment of the Overland Route to India by Waghorn, the extraordinary development of newspaper correspondence, are but a few of the instances that will occur to anyone but slightly acquainted with history; and in our own country does not Government always look with distrustful eyes on any measure laid before it which would appear likely to interfere with, or to retard individual effort?

what was good enough for their fathers is good enough for them. Of course under these circumstances it is almost hopeless to expect any improvement in agriculture or agricultural tools, or any advance towards a use of machinery.

Thus with the nation, at the present moment, it is the extraordinary idea and wish amongst some of the most advanced thinkers to begin their mining operations, smelt their iron with their own coal, and make their own rails for their railways, before they do anything else; they want to have China for the Chinese; they desire to do everything for themselves, and if possible to exclude foreigners. But how far they are from this, they little know.

True, the palmy days of the British merchants are over; the Chinese have at last learnt how to buy and sell without their aid, and they are fast ousting the foreigner from mercantile pursuits. We cannot of course but be sorry that the fine race of men, open-handed and generous, full of courage and enterprise, a type of all that is manly and thoroughly English, should die out and disappear, and mournful tales are told of the destruction in consequence of English trade. This is, however, but a superficial way of regarding the irresistible march of events. If the British merchant is ousted, it is because the Chinese can do things cheaper than the English; the result must be that we in England will get our tea and silk cheaper than heretofore, and that the people of China (if they buy it at all) will buy our cotton cheaper, and in consequence buy more. How then is trade injured: is it not rather on a better footing?

But although commercial pursuits may not be so profitable as they were, there must yet be a future for Europeans in China. Great as the opposition is

at present, railways and telegraphs must certainly be laid down, and will for many years to come give employment to large numbers of Europeans, for owing to the want of originality in the Chinese they cannot hope to undertake the sole management of railways and telegraphs.

The Chinese may be taught almost anything—they are wonderfully quick at learning and imitating—and they would doubtless soon acquire the power of managing engines and telegraphs as long as all went smoothly. But in the moment of difficulty, if any fresh combination of circumstances should necessitate some original action, or even the smallest amount of reasoning, a Chinaman would be found unequal to the emergency. The Chinese Government have for a long time owned steamers, but the engineers are still European, and it will be the same with the railways and telegraphs. There are at present no railways in China. Some of the merchants of Shanghai instituted a short line between Shanghai and Woo-Sung, but it came to an untimely end, not so much on account of the absolute dislike of the Chinese to railways, as from some unfortunate circumstances connected with its origin. Rightly, or wrongly, the measure adopted irritated the Chinese Government, who declined to have the Woo-Sung railway forced upon them, and, when it came into their hands, contemptuously tore it up. During its construction, and in the early days of its existence, there was considerable opposition amongst the people of the adjacent villages, excited probably by the literati of Shanghai. There were even some attempts at suicide, the perpetrators being probably bribed to commit these acts. There was considerable method shown in the way that the attacks on the railway were carried out,

and it may not be uninteresting to notice one in detail as an illustration.

There was a Chinaman living at Woo-Sung of a character so bad that, amongst the inhabitants of the place, he was known as 'The Pirate,' and of a reputation so evil that he dared not show his face in Shanghai. This man had a nephew who was a 'ganger' on the railway. Possibly bribed by the officials, or for some motives that never came to light, this man and his nephew incited the people of Woo-Sung and of another village to evil deeds. They proceeded to dig the ballast from between the rails, and pile it up on the line, in the hope of upsetting the train, but as great crowds of people collected on and around the line at this point, when the train arrived at the obstacles the engine-driver saw that something was wrong, and stopped.

The train was then attacked, but the engine-driver and guard repulsed the mob, captured the nephew of 'The Pirate,' locked him up in a carriage with another prisoner they had caught, and went back towards Shanghai. On the way thither more mobs collected, and one man attempted to commit suicide by throwing himself down in front of the engine; but the engine-driver was again able to pull up in time, and the would-be suicide was made prisoner, and, with the other two, conveyed safely to Shanghai.

The question must have presented itself to many people whether the Chinese are likely to succeed in their resistance to the Russians in Kuldja.

A careful consideration of the circumstances would lead to the conclusion that such a conflict would be disastrous to the Chinese. This is not due to any want of courage in the Chinese soldier,

but simply to want of officers and want of organisation. With European officers, as under Colonel Gordon, we know how well the Chinese have fought, whilst, unlike most Orientals, they have not been utterly demoralised by a check; properly led they would make magnificent troops, for by nature the Chinese are singularly obedient to authority, and would not question the commands of those who had once established an influence over them. In this they are like other Easterns, but more than others their national characteristic renders them particularly incapable of military combinations. A Chinaman can learn anything, but he can conceive nothing; he may readily be taught any number of the most complicated military manœuvres, but place him in a position slightly different from that in which he has learnt, and he will be found utterly incapable of conceiving any modification to suit the altered circumstances. This national characteristic is the growth of centuries of a narrow education, its roots are deeply seated, and lie in the insane reverence for antiquity, which is almost the beginning and end of a Chinaman's belief. Prompt action, readiness of resource, ability to seize on the smallest advantage, or to neutralise a misfortune, and the power to evolve rapidly fresh combinations,—these are the qualities that make a soldier, and these are the very qualities that cannot co-exist with the Chinese want of originality. This is no unimportant matter, for it proves that, as they are, the Chinese cannot be feared as a military nation, but that with a large number of European officers, their almost unlimited numbers, their obedience to authority, and personal bravery, when properly led, would make them almost irresistible.

Further, there is in the Chinese mind a great dread of Europeans. Supernatural powers are popularly attributed to foreigners, and though they profess to hold the barbarians in contempt, in reality the feeling of fear predominates in their mind, although perhaps they would not own it even to themselves. But with good and skilled European officers they would, as they have done before, make magnificent soldiers.

Shanghai in the winter is a very pleasant place for Europeans ; the houses are comfortable, and good coal is burnt in the grates. The Bund, as the road along the river side is called, is fine and broad and kept in good order. There are always some of her Majesty's ships in harbour, and the officers enliven the place. There is a very good club, the members of which are most hospitable to wandering strangers, and the comfortable library full of books is a rare treat after a month in the saddle.

In the European Concession the roads of course are macadamised, and in the evening all the rank and fashion, youth and beauty of Shanghai turn out, on horseback or in carriages, on 'the Bubbling Well Road,' the Rotten Row of the place.

Shanghai boasts a racecourse, and a boat club, a drag-hunt, and a society for paper-chases on horseback, a volunteer rifle corps, and a volunteer fire brigade.

Pigeon-English is much used at Shanghai as a means of interchanging ideas between English and Chinese.

In every English merchant's house in China there is an abominable person called a 'Compradore,' who, in reality, does most of the work, and is the medium between the English merchant and his Chinese client.

At the first appearance of the English in the

country, the Chinese, who are naturally an imitative people, began to pick up a few English words, and soon constructed a language, which was an unnatural combination of deformed English words with Chinese ideas and forms. The result was a jargon as hideous as it was illogical; but the English traders of the early days, finding they understood somewhat of this comic medley, instead of inducing the Chinese to make use of correct words rather than the misshapen syllables they had adopted, encouraged them, by approbation and example, to establish Pigeon-English —a grotesque gibberish which would be laughable if it were not almost melancholy. The English of the present day cannot do much to help themselves, but they might do more; for although it is to a certain extent true that Pigeon-English is understood, while the grammatical language is not, yet it is not possible to believe that when a glass of beer is poured out, even a Chinaman can more readily understand the idiotic expression 'can do' than the good English of 'that will do'; or that a Chinese boy would not in two days learn that 'upstairs' was the same thing as 'top side.'

But far from thinking it any shame to deface our beautiful language, the English seem to glory in its distortion, and will often ask one another to come to 'chow-chow' instead of dinner; and send their 'chin-chins,' even in letters, rather than their compliments; most of them ignorant of the fact that 'chow-chow' is no more Chinese than it is Hebrew; and that 'chin-chin,' though an expression used by the Chinese, does not in its true meaning come near to the 'good-bye, old fellow,' for which it is often used, or the 'compliments' for which it is frequently substituted.

Each of two polite Chinamen entering a room

together will urge the other to go first, and will then sometimes say 'Chin-Chin,' meaning thereby something very different to what an Englishman means when, in a letter, he sends his chin-chins to a common friend.

Pigeon-English has now become a fact that must be accepted, but it would be less deplorable if, instead of being admired, it were reprobated. There are, however, one or two words whose use it is almost impossible to avoid. One of these is *Ma-Fu*, a word that can no more be translated into English than the Hindustani *Ghora-walla*, of which it is an exact and literal translation, and which is used in exactly the same way. The word cannot be rendered into English, for a man who never grooms a horse can hardly be called a groom, and the literal translation 'horseman' means, in ordinary parlance, a man on horseback.

Pagoda is another word, the use of which is sanctioned by long custom.

This word is applied by Europeans to a peculiar form of tower, always called 'Ta' by the Chinese. These are high towers, generally erected in or near large towns, and are supposed to bring good luck to the places which they dominate. They are not used as watch-towers,—sometimes there is no means of ascending them; and a look-out or watch-tower is called 'Lou.' The derivation hitherto usually accepted is from the word *Dagoba*, though various others have been suggested. Littré, in his magnificent dictionary, derives it from the Persian *But*, idol, and *Kedeh*, temple. Stormonth, in his etymological dictionary, gives *pagão* ('pagan' in Portuguese) as the origin of 'pagoda'; and many attempts have been made to derive it from the Chinese language.

Colonel Yule has favoured me with a note on

the subject which can hardly fail to carry conviction :—

'It is a difficult word, but I do not think the origin can be Chinese. The word occurs early in the Portuguese books about India, too early to admit of a Chinese origin. And you will find that Chinese origins for those Anglo-Indian words are very rare. *Mandarin*, *Joss*, *Chop*, are none of them Chinese in origin.[8] Wedgwood gives the derivation from *pagão* 'pagan,' but this is inverting things. The Portuguese probably confounded the word in their own minds with *pagão* more or less, but that could not be the origin of a word they used only in the East. *Dagoba* is a real word, not Burmese but Pali, i.e., of the sacred Indian language used by the Buddhists in Ceylon and Burmah, which is a modification of Sanscrit, much as Italian is of Latin. *Dagoba* is, in Sanscrit, *Dhâtu-garbha*, 'relic-receptacle,' and the word is used in Ceylon ; but I don't believe it is the origin of 'Pagoda.' *But-Kādāh* (or *Kedeh*) is also a real Persian word, and I was formerly inclined to think 'Pagoda' might be from this, shaped by the suggestions of *pagão*. The word is used by the old Portuguese writers in the sense of *idol*, as well as *idol temple*; you find 'Pagod' thus used also in old English travellers. It is likewise applied to the gold coin which was long the standard currency of South India. This, in its native shape, had figures of idols on it.

'I believe now that the real origin of the name is the word *bhagawat* or *bhagawatî*, 'deity' or 'divine,' which is current all over India with various special applications, and which appears in Marco Polo in the shape of *Pacauta*.[9] As regards the attempts to

[8] *Mandarin* is merely a Portuguese corruption of Sansk. *Mantri*, a minister of State.—(Y.)

[9] See 2nd edit. ii. 322, 330.

derive the word from Chinese, I may note the occurrence of the word in Barbosa (1516), whilst the Portuguese were not familiar with China till many years after.'

I was now making preparations for a long journey into the interior of China, and found plenty of occupation in getting stores of all kinds ready.

Mr. Baber, of the Consular service, who was a member of the Grosvenor expedition to Yun-nan, had invited me to accompany him to Ch'ung-Ch'ing. I eagerly availed myself of his invitation, but as yet formed no definite plans as to my future movements, only making up my mind that I would be ready for anything that might turn up.

I therefore prepared stores of all kinds, and arranged my provision-boxes in pairs, each pair to contain a complete supply for two months. Chin-Tai used to carry out my orders with amazement. First I had some large tin boxes, for soldering down, made to order, with strong wooden dovetailed coverings. Then I bought some small tin boxes to put inside these, but finding they did not suit I abolished them, and had others made. On trial these were found too large, and had to be reduced. Each time that Chin-Tai brought the things in, and saw me try them, first one way, then another, and finally carefully weigh every box, he would get more puzzled, till at last he shrugged his shoulders, and came to the conclusion that I was mad.[1]

[1] I had 6 boxes packed each with 30 candles (English candles, six to the lb.)

1 tin box for tea, 5″ × 5½″ × 8½″.
4 boxes of matches.
6 2-oz. pots of Liebig's Extract.
2 packets of Marseilles compressed vegetables.
1 bottle Worcester sauce.

The Chinese theatre at Shanghai, though a mongrel establishment—half Chinese and half foreign—is, nevertheless, well worth a visit, for the acting is *bonâ fide* Chinese acting, and the house is filled with Chinese, who come here to enjoy themselves in their own characteristic fashion. But the size, shape, and arrangement of the house are essentially European, as are also the lighting with gas, and the system of payment at the doors.

There is no such thing in China, properly speaking, as a theatre at which people pay. Theatrical performances are usually given by rich people to their friends; or sometimes the inhabitants of a street will combine and engage a set of actors; in this case the theatre is set up in the street, occupying the greater

1 tin box for cigars, 10″ × 8½″ × 2½″.
1 box of toothpicks.
1 tin box of tooth powder, 3½″ × 2½″ × 1½″.
1 small bottle cayenne pepper.
Six other of the large boxes were packed each with:—
30 candles.
1 tin of salt, 5″ × 4″ × 3½″.
1 tin of mustard, 2½″ × 4″ × 3½″.
6 2-oz. pots of Liebig's Extract.
1 tin for cigars, 8½″ × 6″ × 2½″.
1 packet Marseilles preserved vegetables.
4 boxes of matches.
4 cakes of toilet soap.
1 cake of yellow soap.
1 cake of carbolic acid soap.
2 little boxes of Brand's meat lozenges.

Each of these boxes, when finally packed and soldered down, weighed a little over 30 lbs.; quite enough for the mountainous countries.

The quantity of tea that I took was unnecessary, but I only had my northern experience to guide me; and in the province of Chi-Li, and beyond the Great Wall, tea can never be bought. In Southern, Central, and Western China, tea is always to be procured. The lids of the boxes were all screwed down, so that they could be opened and shut as often as necessary; and as I could not manage to get sufficient candles into the boxes without unduly increasing the weight, I took besides an extra supply.

part of it, and leaving scant room for a passing sedan-chair. But at Shanghai the Chinese have learnt European manners so far as to have a public theatre, to which anyone is admitted on payment.

It is a lofty, oblong building, that would be considered large even in London. A gallery, supported on plain wooden pillars, runs round three sides of it, and is divided into boxes, in which, when we entered the theatre, we could see family parties, smoking, drinking tea, and cracking water-melon seeds.

There were about half a dozen rows of people in the end gallery, those in the front having tables for their tea, sweets, &c. In the body of the theatre, the people sitting in the best places were provided with tables, but those behind were all packed close together.

The stall-keeper led us to the front, pushed aside the people that were standing about, without the least ceremony or politeness, walked up to one of the best tables, turned out the family party without asking their leave, and most obsequiously invited us to take our places.

The Europeanised Chinaman seems to acquire a supercilious contempt for his more conservative countrymen. This may be in a great measure owing to the fact that attendants amongst Europeans are so often taken from a low class.

On one occasion, a Chinese gentleman was visiting me, and I ordered one of my servants to get some tea; he told me that he would get tea for me if I wanted it, but that he was not going to wait on a Chinaman.

Of course this sentiment was more strongly expressed towards the unofficial classes, and for a magistrate of high rank my servants had a certain amount of respect.

A man with an enormous basket over his arm, full of water-melon seeds, walked about the theatre, continually filling the little dishes in front of the spectators with this incomprehensible delicacy. He was obliged to refill his basket (about the size of an English baker's) many times during the evening.

Tea, of course in Chinese fashion, is consumed by all. The ordinary Chinese fashion of making tea (except in the West, where the tea of Pu-erh is taken) is to put about a teaspoonful of tea into the cup, and pour boiling water on it. The Chinese drink it nearly scalding, and the cups are continually refilled with boiling water, fresh tea rarely being put into the cups. The object of putting a cover over the cup, instead of a saucer underneath, is to prevent the tea-leaves getting into the mouth. A Chinaman, before putting the cup to his mouth, always sweeps the surface of the tea with the cover, to push the floating leaves away from the side. He is very skilful in drinking, always holding cup and cover with one hand, and leaving just sufficient aperture for the infusion to pass without letting the leaves through.

The Chinese have a theory that if the water is properly boiling the leaves will not float on the tea, but if the tea has been made with water that does not boil the leaves will at first come to the surface.

The stage of the theatre was raised, as in Europe, and the orchestra, consisting of one wooden and two brass drums, was on the stage. There was a little painting on the background, but not much scenery.

The actors were dressed very gorgeously in silk and embroidery; and their faces were covered with paint, red, black, or white; the paint being apparently

mixed with red lead or putty, laid on all over their faces with a scalpel, and highly polished.

Female actors are very rare in China; the women's parts are generally taken by men, who speak in a high falsetto.

The piece performed on the occasion of our visit was in a great measure conducted in dumb show; and unless one of the characters was actually speaking, the orchestra beat their drums with all their might, the noise made by them becoming almost unbearable.

All the performers seemed more or less acrobats, and no one remained on the stage more than a few minutes at a time; an actor would say a few words, posture a good deal, throw his legs about in a manner not far short of the celebrated Vokes, and then go out, some one else coming on immediately.

The performance on this occasion ended in a tremendous battle that lasted *half* an hour, during which four regular acrobats, naked to the waist, came on the stage and performed some feats that would not be considered very remarkable in Europe.

One of the company was evidently a sort of Mr. Toole; for directly he appeared, and before he said or did anything, the audience at once began to laugh in anticipation.

The theatre was very cool and well ventilated, but the awful drumming and noise was so nerve-shattering and so continuous that we none of us could endure it very long; and passing through a vestibule, where the nose was assailed with odours that seem necessary to a Chinaman's existence, we stepped into the fresh air of the street, where a number of chairs and jinnyrickshaws, the [2] carriages and cabs of the

[2] See p. 10. Giles states this word to be taken from the Japanese pronunciation of three characters signifying 'Man's—Strength—Cart.'

Shanghai Chinese, were waiting for their owners, or for the chance of being hired.

The English, of course, carry their sporting proclivities with them to Shanghai; not only is there a society for paper-chasing on ponyback, but one of the merchants at the time of my visit had started a pack of draghounds, which gave capital gallops and plenty of jumping to an enthusiastic band of followers.

But, undoubtedly, the sport *par excellence* at Shanghai is the wild pheasant shooting, which with its concomitants of cheery companions, complete freedom, and life in a house-boat, is perhaps only to be equalled by woodcock-shooting in the neighbourhood of Corfu.

Most of the leading merchants have a house-boat; this is merely one of the ordinary shapeless, flat-bottomed, shallow boats of China, with two or three rooms built on it; these are always very comfortably fitted up with beds, tables, lockers, &c., and have besides accommodation for servants, cookery, and dogs. It is usual to make up a party in a couple of boats, and go away for a week or two to the Grand Canal, and shoot over the plain between it and Shanghai.

This country was the theatre of war during the Tai-Ping rebellion; for years afterwards it remained a desert, with nothing but ruined villages, and scarcely a single inhabitant. During this time the pheasants and deer increased and multiplied; and not many years ago, it was possible for a good shot to bag forty brace of pheasants to his own gun in a single day; now the country is being repeopled, villages are springing up, cultivation is increasing, and of course the game is diminishing.

I joined some friends in a trip, and leaving

Shanghai one night, we found ourselves the next morning steaming up the Yang-Tzŭ-Chiang.

Like the rivers of most Eastern countries, those of China do not bear the same name at every part of their course.

Near its sources this mighty river is known under various names. The Mongol name of *Murui-ussu* is given by both Huc and Prejevalsky; the latter gives *Di-chu* as a name in use by the Tangutans (as he calls the tribes of N.-E. Tibet); Burei-chu, or Bri-chu, corrupted by the Chinese to *Polei-chu*, is another Tibetan name. The Tibetans again at Bath'ang, and a little lower, call it the N'jeh-chŭ ('chŭ' is the Tibetan for 'river').

From Bath'ang to Fu-chou it has the appellation of Chin-Sha-Chiang, or Golden Sand River, from the quantity of gold dust amongst the sand in its bed. No other name is applied to so long a stretch as this; and the Chin-Sha is the name best known of all.

Near its mouth, where it opens out to a width of some miles, the Chinese call it the Yang-Tzŭ-Chiang, or Ocean River. Friar Odoric, writing about A.D. 1320–1330 of the Great River, calls it the River Talay (Dalai), which is just a Mongol version of the Chinese name, and would seem, therefore, to have been applied to it by the Mongols then ruling in China. The use of the word 'Dalai' in this way is, therefore, quite parallel to that of 'Bahr,' as applied by the Arabs to the Nile. So also the Tibetans apply the term 'Samandrang' (samudra, 'the Ocean') to the Indus and Sutlej.[3]

I have seen it stated that the name Ta-Ho is applied also.

This is to a certain extent true; for there is

[3] Cathay, vol. i., p. 121.

scarcely a river in China that at some place is not called Ta-Ho, or Great River. Where an affluent enters a river, it is of most frequent occurrence to find the main river called Ta-Ho, and the affluent Hsiao-Ho, or Little River.

The French have invented a name expressly for themselves, and call it 'Le Fleuve Bleu'; and Prejevalsky has unfortunately adopted it.

A day and night's steaming brought us to Chin-Kiang; and thence we started in a native boat for the Grand Canal.

The Grand Canal of China is a work that has attracted much attention amongst Europeans, who have generally formed a vague idea of a magnificent highway, where great fleets of fine ships come and go, and where there is yet room for an unlimited increase of traffic. As a matter of fact, it is in many parts little more than a stinking ditch; it is already overcrowded to a degree almost incredible; and the water in it is often so low that a junk of very moderate dimensions may stick and entirely stop the traffic.

We entered the canal from the Yang-Tzŭ by a creek, ten yards wide, so full of craft that, to an inexperienced eye, it would have seemed impossible to get through, as the vessels completely blocked the waterway, none of the crews having apparently the least desire to make progress.

Our boatman, however, coolly charged them, paying equal heed to the oaths and howls of the people on the boats smaller and weaker than his own, and to the indifferent and supercilious glances of the occupants of the big and unwieldy junks.

Great and small they were somehow pushed on one side, two of the lightest being nearly shipwrecked in the process.

We joined our house-boat close to the city of Tan-Yang, where we were jammed for twenty-four hours, surrounded by an immovable block of boats; and during the next day it was only by the dint of strong language on the part of everyone in the boat and out of it, that we succeeded in advancing about a mile.

The sight was, however, extraordinary; and well worth coming to see.

Standing on the top of the embankment, the eye roamed over many miles of perfectly flat country, where numerous villages were hidden in clumps of bamboo, and where the canal, with its forest of masts, stretched away into the dim horizon.

About the whole scene there was a wonderful amount of life and animation: gay streamers from the thousands of masts, people shouting and pushing, and trackers on the banks calling to their companions in their boats.

Each boat contained a whole family of many generations, and often some half-dozen coffins besides; for the Chinese are very particular about their coffins,—building them of rare and choice woods long before they die, and sometimes giving as much as a thousand taels for a good one;—they carry them about wherever they go, and make them their constant companions in life, until in death they become their homes.

There was a huge war-junk in front of us, stuck in the mud, completely blocking the way; and not until after a great amount of vociferation from the men in our boat could the people on the unwieldy vessel be induced to make any effort to get off; at last she moved, we followed, and as she went aground again almost immediately our bow bumped her stern, whereat a hag, so ancient and so hideous as to pass all

conception, put her head out of a window and made use of language more hideous than herself.

Presently it was necessary for two men to go behind, and pushing handspikes under the keel, to hoist the vessel by main force out of the mud. In the course of a few hours our boat succeeded in passing her, but only by dint of much violent abuse, rough dealing, and the liberal use of the almighty dollar.

'And this,' I thought, 'is the Grand Canal of China!'

For the tired merchant, or the hard-worked consular official, the novelty of the life on a trip of this kind, and the air and exercise, form a pleasant change at Christmas time after many months of busy Shanghai; and though the country is flat, there is still enough diversity and incident in the day's proceedings to make them amusing.

Walking over the wide plain not far from the canal, whose high banks conceal all but the tallest masts, we find nearly all the ground cultivated, and the young green crops coming up. In other parts we have to plod over a heavy fallow. Here is an old graveyard, covered with long dry grass and a few thorns, and it will be surprising if we do not turn a pheasant out of it. Now we come to the ruins of a village, with thick thorn bushes growing amongst the remains of the mud walls, from which a couple of cocks get up in a terrible bustle, cluck-clucking as they top the bamboo growing just beyond. The report of the gun brings some people out of a house that has been built amongst the ruins; they follow us some way, but soon get tired of walking after us.

Here is a creek with a great deal of soft mud in the bottom, and we must make a long detour to find a bridge. After crossing it, we come to a bamboo

copse, some twenty or thirty yards square, on the site of an old cottage whose walls can still be traced amongst the undergrowth of brambles and thorns.

A peasant standing by says he saw a couple of deer go into it; but his information turns out worthless, though the thicket contains half a dozen pheasants.

By the side of another wide creek a bird gets up, and drops on the other side.

One of us calls out in polite Chinese to a peasant digging in his field, and asks him if he will fetch it.

'I do not understand any language but my own,' replies the man, shading his eyes with his hand, and looking across the water at our figures.

'But,' replies our speaker, 'I am talking your language.'

'Why, you don't say so; I never should have thought it; I thought no barbarian could ever learn our beautiful tongue.'

So we return to our boat, where a cold pheasant cut up awaits us, and seems so large that a hot dispute arises whether it can possibly be only one bird.

Besides the pheasants, a kind of small deer, commonly miscalled a hog-deer, is very abundant, but it offers very poor sport.

In the neighbourhood of Chin-kiang there are great numbers of enormous wild boar; some were brought in to Shanghai when I was there, weighing 360 English pounds. These boars have very small tusks, and some people, on this account, hold that they are the descendants of domestic pigs, that have at some time or another escaped from civilisation, and adopted the wild life of the forests.

We did not stay away long enough to find our trip monotonous, and returned to Shanghai satisfied, but not wearied with our sport.

The Mixt Court in Shanghai is very interesting to a stranger.

Offences are tried here before two judges, one Chinese and one foreign. One of the English judges took me with him one day, and I sat on the bench next to the Chinese official, who had the rank of Chih-Fu.

The room was fairly large, and the judges' table raised on a low platform. The space in front was divided into three portions by railings; the policemen, witnesses, &c., were on the right, and the prisoner was brought in to the centre division, led by his plait. He was obliged to remain on his knees during the trial.

This man had pretended that he was a broker, and had gone to the different European firms, from each of which he had obtained a sample of sugar, which he afterwards sold retail. He was convicted and sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

The Chinese official at this stage of the proceedings offered me a cigar, and tea was brought in; after which refection another prisoner was arraigned for driving a jinnyrickshaw without a license; and for which he received twenty blows with a stick.

The next had stolen a watch; and the last in a crowded thoroughfare had refused to 'move on.' It was a very amusing sight, and strangely like 'orderly-room' in an English barrack.

During my stay in Shanghai an event of some significance occurred.

Up to this period Messrs. Russell & Co., an American firm, had owned a very fine fleet of steamers, plying up the Yang-Tzŭ, and to Tien-Tsin.

Besides Messrs. Russell & Co. there was an English company that owned steamers not inferior to these; and there was also a Chinese company, whose

vessels, though large and well built, were never favourites with either Europeans or Chinese. The last was strongly supported by the Government, especially by Li-Hung-Chang, and in the hopes of increasing their business and gradually getting rid of foreigners on the river, they bought the whole of Messrs. Russell & Co.'s vessels at a very high price.

From the fact that after the agreement of sale was made public, the shares of the Russell Company went up from sixty to ninety, it may be gathered that the Americans did not make a very bad bargain.

The Chinese traders were not at all pleased to see the boats pass into the hands of the Chinese company; for they feared that their Government would put pressure on them, and compel them to send their merchandise in the Chinese ships, where they knew that they would be compelled to pay more, and be less well served.

Before leaving Shanghai, Chin-Tai was instructed in the art of bread-making, so that, during the two months on the river, we were never reduced to chupatties.

I also obtained possession of a dog whose numerous good qualities, as appraised by his owner, would have made him cheap at any price. Baber and I laid in a considerable stock of provisions and delicacies for the voyage, amongst which two barrels of flour took a prominent position.

Before starting, I engaged another servant, also a Tien-Tsin man, and friend of Chin-Tai. His name was Chung-Erh, and, according to his own statements, he threw up a marvellously lucrative engagement, out of pure love and friendship for Chin-Tai.

CHAPTER V.

THE OCEAN RIVER.

Start up the Yang-Tzŭ—The Dog Tib, and his ethnological perspicacity—On Board the 'Hankow'—Transhipment and Arrival at Hankow—Manufacture of Brick-Tea—Tea in Chinese Inns—H.M.S. Kestrel—Boat engaged for Upper Yang-Tzŭ—The Lady Skipper and her Craft—Our Departure—Chinese Fuel—Our Eccentricities in Chinese Eyes—The New Year Festival—Chinese View of the Wind-points—Hsin-Ti—Entrance of the Tung-Ting Lake—Aspects of the River—Camel Reach—Vicissitudes of Tracking—Chinese Duck-Shooters—Great Bend—Wild Geese and Porpoises—Rice as Food—Ho-Hsueh and Sha-Shih—River Embankments—Tung-Shih—Meeting with H.M.S. 'Kestrel'—The Hills Entered—Walks ashore—Population dense only on the River—Passage in a Cotton Boat—The Telescope Puzzles—Arrival at I-Chang—The Chinese Gunboat.

At length the time came for our departure, and the cordial good wishes that I received from so many, whose acquaintance I had hardly formed, made me feel that I was leaving many good friends behind; it was not therefore without some regrets that, finally turning my back on Shanghai, I stepped on board the steamer 'Hankow,' on the night of January 23, 1877.

The steamers that ply on the Yang-Tzŭ-Chiang, between Shanghai and Hankow, are built in the style of the American river-boats; they draw scarcely any water, are very light, and are perhaps the most luxurious steamers in the world.

Baber and I were the only passengers, and so there was plenty of room for us and our luggage, of

which there was by no means an inconsiderable quantity.

Before turning into the luxurious cabin I went to see the dog, whose name was 'Tib,' but he barked at me as an intruder, and the endearing epithets and biscuits that I lavished upon him producing not the slightest acknowledgment of good-will on his part, I left him to renew his acquaintance at a later date.

This dog had been almost entirely amongst Chinese, and either the appearance or the smell of a European was distasteful to him. The Chinese, who to a European nose always emit a peculiar odour, declare that they can perfectly well distinguish the smell of a European. There can be no doubt that 'Tib' could detect, even at a distance, a European by his smell, for he invariably barked at the French missionaries directly they entered the courtyard of my house at Ch'êng-Tu, although they were always dressed in Chinese clothes.

Anyone who has been long in India will recognise the smell of a Hindoo; and although it is not flattering to our vanity to admit it, it certainly seems as if we, as well as all other people, had an odour peculiar to ourselves.

January 24.—There was a Chinese steamer following us up the river; but our vessel was a little the faster of the two, and there was a merry twinkle in the captain's eye, as he stopped at each station and picked up all the Chinese passengers, leaving none for the vessel following. He had done the same on his last trip, and had so much annoyed the Chinese that they had invented a tale for the occasion, and had officially reported that our captain had sent press-gangs ashore and taken the passengers on board by force.

January 25.—It was a cold snowy morning, and the hills as we passed them were white ; chill, heavy clouds were overhead ; the wind whistled through the ship, and the dreary cry of the leadsman, which could be plainly heard in the saloon, made us appreciate the comforts to be found inside.

On the voyage up this river it is necessary to sound without ceasing ; thus, as regularly as the hand of the clock touched the minute, the voice of the Malay quarter-master was heard in a kind of slow sing-song, 'No bottom,' 'By the mark five,' and so on.

January 26.—We anchored at three o'clock on the morning of January 26 for want of water, as the river was very low. The time of year for shipping tea occurs just when the river is at its highest, and then there is water enough for the great ocean-going steamers to run up to Hankow, where they take their loads of tea, and steam off direct for the London Docks.

At about nine o'clock the small steamer 'Tun-Sin' came alongside, to take some of the cargo about fourteen miles up the river, where it remained in lighters until another vessel came for it from Hankow ; but as she could not take everything at one trip we remained on board the 'Hankow' all night.

January 27.—The decks were covered with snow when we looked out in the morning, and a heavy northerly gale howled mournfully. The work of shifting cargo advanced but slowly, and was not completed till five in the evening. We were able to appreciate the light build of these vessels, for as the bales of merchandise were moved about the deck below the saloon, the glasses on the table jumped from their places with the tremendous vibration.

When all was finished we said good-bye to the captain of the 'Hankow,' and embarked on the 'Tun-Sin.'

January 28.—Another cheerless snowy morning broke over the muddy river, and a damp mist almost hid the banks. Few boats passed up and down, and except one or two sea-gulls, circling round a melancholy-looking beacon, there seemed no life in the place.

We had anchored during the night, and had not been long under way in the morning when we ran on a mud-bank in the deepest part of the channel. The cargo was at once discharged into lighters kept for the purpose; but we did not get off the shoal till about midnight.

January 29.—We took the cargo on board again during the morning, and weighed anchor at 1 p.m. The sun came out for the first time during the voyage, and lit up the scenery as we ran along under the slopes and cliffs which here ran down to the river from the hills on each side.

January 30.—We arrived at Hankow[4] at about ten in the morning in a dismal pour of rain, and we thoroughly enjoyed the blazing fires of the hospitable consulate in which we were lodged.

Soon afterwards the rain turned to snow, which fell steadily during the rest of our stay.

Some idea of the magnificence of the Yang-Tzŭ may be formed from the fact that at Hankow, 680 miles from the sea, the river is still about 1,100 yards broad.

It is embanked with a magnificent bund, which is

[4] According to Sir T. Wade's system of orthography this should be Han-K'ou (the mouth of the Han), but the other spelling is now too widely accepted to admit of change.

the principal feature of this town. At the time of my visit the water was unusually low, being about thirty-five feet below the top of the bund. In the summer it rises sometimes even over this work, flooding the country and the town.

Under these circumstances, supposing the average velocity of the current to be six miles an hour (and it certainly is not less), upwards of a million cubic feet of water per second must pass Hankow.

Hiring boats for the journey to Ch'ung-Ch'ing was not altogether a simple matter. It was necessary to let our servants make all the arrangements before disclosing ourselves, for boatmen sometimes object to taking foreigners, and always try to overcharge them.

It was easier to settle our money matters. A firm at Hankow gave us a letter of credit on their Chinese agents at Ch'ang-Ch'ing, so we were not obliged to carry more silver than was necessary for the voyage.

During our stay in Hankow we visited the Russian factory, where brick-tea is prepared for the Mongolian market.

Bricks are made here of both green and black tea, but always from the commonest and cheapest; in fact, for the black tea, the dust and sweepings of the establishment are used.

The tea dust is first collected, and if it is not in a sufficiently fine powder, it is beaten with wooden sticks on a hot iron plate. It is then sifted through several sieves to separate the fine, medium, and coarse grains. The tea is next steamed over boiling water, after which it is immediately put into the moulds, the fine dust in the centre, and the coarse grains round the edges.

These moulds are like those used for making ordinary clay bricks, but very much stronger, and of less depth, so that the cakes of tea when they come out are more like large tiles than bricks.

The people who drink this tea like it black; wherefore about a teaspoonful of soot is put into each mould, to give it the depth of colouring and gloss that attracts the Mongolian purchasers!

The moulds are now put under a powerful press, and the covers wedged tightly down, so that when removed from the press the pressure on the cake is still maintained.

After two or three days the wedges are driven out, the bricks are removed from the moulds, and each brick is wrapped up separately in a piece of common white paper. Baskets, which when full weigh 130 lbs., are carefully packed with the bricks, and are sent to Tien-Tsin, whence they find their way all over Mongolia and up to the borders of Russia.

I was told that this tea could be sold retail in St. Petersburg, with a fair profit, at the rate of twenty copecks the pound.

The green tea is not made of such fine stuff, but of stalks and leaves.

The Mongolians make their infusion by boiling. In this manner they extract all the strength, and as there is no delicate flavour to lose, they do not injure the taste.

The manufacturer here set up a small steam-engine for the press, but found coolie labour cheaper.

He told me that the tea the Russians usually drink in their own country is taken direct to Odessa from Hankow by the Suez Canal; and in answer to an inquiry that I made, he assured me that even before

the canal was opened it never passed through London.

A better price is given by the Russians in Hankow than the English care to pay. This is the real reason why the tea in Russia is superior to any found in London; for caravan tea is a delicacy even amongst the nobles of St. Petersburg.

Anything but very ordinary tea is rare in Chinese inns or houses; occasionally, however, a cup of tea has been given me with a delicacy of flavour and a bouquet that I have never met with elsewhere.

A very delicate tea is grown in Pu-Erh in Yunnan; it is pressed into annular cakes, and can almost always be purchased in the large towns of Western China, even in Ssŭ-Ch'uan; cakes of the Pu-Erh tea were often given to me as a present. But these are exceptions to the general rule, as the tea in inns and private houses is indifferent.

The brick-tea made for the Tibetan market is prepared entirely by Chinese at Ya-Chou. It also is made from dust and rubbish, and the manufacture is very similar to the process at Hankow.

H.M.S. 'Kestrel' was at Hankow, and a day or two before our departure she left for I-Ch'ang, now a treaty port under one of the clauses of the Chi-Fu Convention, carrying thither Mr. King, the newly-appointed Consul to that place.

The European officers of the Chinese Customs Service were also going up, so that Baber and I anticipated a merry meeting on our arrival. The 'Kestrel' left Hankow on February 5; the captain expecting to be back again in about three weeks. But the river was so low that it was eventually a very much longer time before the ship returned.

When the mysterious process of hiring the boats

had been accomplished by our servants, we went on board to look round, and to be introduced to the owner and skipper, who was a lady.

She declared herself capable of navigating the ship, taking the helm, working the *ulo*, and keeping the trackers up to the mark. Our subsequent experience showed that the last of these accomplishments was her strong point, for she had a tongue that nothing could withstand. The *ulo* is a kind of gigantic scull, that is worked by two or more people, sometimes from the stern, and sometimes at the side of the vessel.

The old lady introduced her little boy to us, who made a polite Chinese bow; and thus all the ceremonies were complete.

February 7.—Our large boat lay at the mouth of the Han river; but the small one came down in the afternoon to take us off, and we went on board with our servants, our dog, and our few remaining effects, including 70 lbs. of corned beef that Chin-Tai had bought for six dollars.

At 3.15 the last rope was let go; the Consul on the bund waved his hand; we pushed off into the stream, and started on our long journey. With a light westerly breeze we made our way over the current, and reached the large junk that was lying off Han-Yang.

Here we had to wait some time; for the old lady had suddenly discovered that a sail would not be altogether a useless article, and had sent to buy one. So we lay with the nose of our boat just ashore.

A steep mud slope about thirty feet high rose above us. This seemed to be a deposit for every conceivable kind of filth, and grubbing in the mire there were pigs, dogs, and miserable human beings who

scraped a living by turning over the dirt with little rakes, and picking up scraps.

Crooked piles driven into the mud supported wretched hovels that overhung the river, and at the foot of the mud slope there were hundreds of all sorts of boats.

The men of the ferries in which the people crossed the Han river, or the Yang-Tzŭ, were inviting passengers to make use of their boats; each man praising the excellences of his own craft, and trying to shout his neighbour down. Some of them would not start until they were loaded almost to the water's edge.

Sometimes a couple of richer men engaged a boat for themselves. Here one little boy was navigating a crowded vessel, and there a couple of big men were rowing one almost empty; but all were talking in the loudest tones, abusing one another, pushing each other about, and making a desperate noise.

Our old lady was slow about her purchases; and after watching this noisy busy scene for some time, I looked round the boat to see what manner of craft was to be our home for so many weeks. She was about eighty feet long and eleven feet broad, and the main deck, if such a term is applicable, was about two feet out of the water.

The bows, for a space of twenty feet, were uncovered; aft of this a house about twenty feet long was built right across the deck, leaving no room to pass round the sides; there was a small open space aft of the house; and right over the stern another high building, where our skipper lived, was piled up to a great height. The house was about seven feet high, and was divided into four compartments, giving us a living room and two bedrooms for ourselves, and a room for the servants.

There was a hold about three feet deep where we stowed away our heavy boxes.

We had a little American stove in the sitting-room. It used sometimes to get red hot; at others the chimney would get twisted, and the wind blowing down would send great tongues of flame darting across the room; of course it smoked occasionally; but these little vagaries made us appreciate it all the more when it burnt properly.

Our party now consisted of Baber and myself, a photographer whom Baber took up with him, Baber's chief servant Hwu-Fu, who had travelled some time with Baron von Richthofen; Baber's second servant, Wang-Erh, a giant of six feet two inches, who had been a soldier drilled by European officers, but who had never before been in the service of a European; my two servants, Chin-Tai and Chung-Erh, both over six feet high, and 'Tib,' a brown retriever. There was, in addition, an official sent by the Tao-Tai of Hankow to accompany Baber.

February 8.—We were still at Han-Yang when we awoke in the morning, and our skipper now said that the sail did not fit well, and must be altered before she could start.

So we tried to shake ourselves down; we made bookshelves of the doors of our sleeping cabins, and pasted paper over the cracks in the wall through which an icy wind was blowing.

The sacrificial cock was expended during the day, and his blood sprinkled on the bow of the boat; for without this ceremony, and the subsequent more serious one of eating the flesh of the bird, it would have been nothing less than sheer madness to make a start, at least so thought our skipper and her crew.

Towards the afternoon a fresh easterly breeze

sprang up; the old lady suddenly declared that the sail was ready, and we started at 2.15 p.m., but only made seven miles before anchoring for the night, or rather mooring to the bank, at a little village called Chuan-K'ou.

February 9.—The snow-storm was so heavy all the morning that the sailors would not leave their moorings, and we passed the time looking out of the window to see if there was a change of weather, and in trying to stop up the cracks about the door through which the snow was driving.

The river was full of boats and huge rafts of timber; some of the latter a hundred feet long, fifty feet broad, and ten or twelve feet deep, on which there were often half a dozen huts for the people in charge.

In the afternoon the snow cleared off a little, and with a strong wind we sailed to Chin-K'ou, where we ran into a creek for the night.

Our fireplace had not as yet proved by any means a success, and on thinking that the fuel was in fault we experimented on the Chinese mixture of coal and clay. The Chinese are too economical to burn coal alone, and mix coal-dust with a certain proportion of clay, making up round balls about as large as eggs. This burns well enough, and gives out a fair amount of heat, but it is, even in a house, a very unpleasant fuel on account of the dirt; and in our cabin, a gust of wind coming down the chimney, or a draught in an unexpected corner, used to blow this fine dust all over the room in clouds, and we came to the conclusion that we had not yet discovered a perfect fuel.

February 10.—We were always moored at night in a crowd of vessels; and of a morning, when all was quiet, the whole place seemed to wake up sud-

denly. At six o'clock there was not a sound; but a few minutes later the crews of all the junks in the neighbourhood would arouse themselves with one accord.

Then commenced the shouting and jabbering of all the people getting under way. Presently another junk would come against us with a violent bump, and threaten to carry away the chimney of our stove.

This rouses the ire of our skipper and her crew, who all at once vociferate in the choicest terms that they can cull from their flowery language, the crew of the other junk returning the abuse, and amid the babel the shrill voice of the old lady is easily distinguished. Then it is our turn to run into something else; and so on, scraping and bumping, with all the timbers of the deck-house groaning and creaking, until we are clear of the crowd.

During the morning we ran to Teng-Chia-K'ou before a fair and strong wind.

Here the river turns round with a sweep, and in company with a number of other junks we were obliged to anchor in a creek; for these vessels can only sail with the wind on the quarter or astern, and in deep snow the trackers can make no way against the combination of a strong wind and swift current.

From the position in which we were moored, the wind now was dead ahead, and blew more snow in through the cracks of the door. We spent the morning in the manufacture of curtains, and sat all day with everything closed, wrapped up in ulsters, and reading or writing by the aid of candles.

The Chinese used to think us very funny people; we never could sit in a room without a fire; although they never used a fire at all except for cooking, and were quite content to remain with windows and doors

open, almost in the open air, trusting to their wadded garments and thick-soled shoes to keep them warm. They saw no harm in a gale of wind blowing in their faces, but we were always draught-hunting, stuffing in some cotton wool here, pasting paper there, hanging curtains up, and taking an immense amount of trouble to keep out a little snow or a current of cold air; and as for our fire, we were perpetually fussing about it; if we found one kind of fuel did not burn, we were always worrying the servants to try something else, instead of doing without, like sensible people.

Then they never cleaned their places, why should we? but if we found an inch or two of harmless dust anywhere, or a pile of dirt in a quiet corner, nothing would satisfy us but having it removed. And notwithstanding all this, we, who felt the cold so much, were always taking off our clothes, and would in the morning sit for no conceivable object in a tub of cold water, instead of following their plan of keeping on the winter garments night and day, until the weather should begin to get warm. Then our clothes were preposterous—stupid, thin, tight-fitting affairs—as useless as they were hideous; no wonder we felt cold.

We certainly did feel cold; but notwithstanding the severity of the weather we adhered to our national customs, and at length, by dint of perseverance, we made our room tolerably tight, and managed to keep up a moderate degree of warmth.

During the day the wind moderated, and we started with the rest of the fleet.

At the best of times, the scenery can scarcely be said to make this part of the river inviting; and we did not find much to regret in the necessity for keeping the windows covered. There was nothing to see

but sloping mud banks, and a dead-level beyond, all white with snow; whilst a collection of miserable huts that there might be here and there, with a stunted and leafless willow, a few reeds or bits of long grass, just appearing out of the white covering, only served to lend additional dreariness to the scene.

In the evening there is the usual shouting and hallooing as we come to our moorings; bump succeeds bump as we crash amongst the mass of boats, until we ultimately make fast, and the men have their supper.

Then the loud cry of the hawkers, who go about amongst the craft selling bean-curd cakes, or little drops of spirit, makes itself heard above the shouts of the sailors; this gradually ceases, and nothing but the hum of conversation is left; by-and-by, as one by one the men wrap themselves up and go to sleep, this dies away, and all is still, save for an occasional word from some one less sleepy than the rest. The last voice presently is hushed, and as we sit reading or writing there is not a sound but the lapping of the water against the sides of the boat.

February 11.—The sun at last shone out again; the morning was clear and frosty, and after having been shut up in the dark for so long it was pleasant to stretch our legs ashore whilst the coolies were tracking the junk up, walking with bare feet and legs in the snow.

February 12.—This was the time of the Chinese new year festival, which lasts about ten days; there was much feasting, popping of crackers, and beating of drums all the morning, and the people were so well amused they did not want to leave. We sent out at seven o'clock to know when they were going; they replied 'immediately.' At eight o'clock we wanted

to know how long it would be before they started; they answered 'no time at all.' At nine o'clock we said they really must get under way; they declared they were going to. At ten o'clock we threatened that they should have no new year's present unless they moved at once; they sent back to say that we were just off. At eleven o'clock Baber ordered Hwu-Fu to go to our accompanying official; but they said he would be left behind if we let him leave the boat. At twelve o'clock we began to make a real disturbance, when they let go the mooring rope, and we went on to a place called Hua-K'ou.

February 13.—This was the Chinese new year's day; and at about nine o'clock all the servants entered in their most gorgeous clothes to wish us a happy new year, and to receive the wonted tribute to the inevitable custom.

The captain then came in, with two of her men and her little child, for the same purpose.

A present of 5,000 cash was then distributed amongst the crew, that sum representing something less than 1*l.*

February 14.—We asked our captain this morning which way the wind was. She replied that the north wind was strong, but the east wind not so strong; by which she meant that it was about NNE., and made us almost think she had learnt mathematics, and understood the resolution of forces!

We were off at six o'clock with a strong wind, and bowled along merrily; but the inconvenience of heeling over was considerable, for our tables and chairs were ordinary land furniture, and not made fast in any way.

The wind held true all the morning, and we accomplished thirty-nine miles.

February 15.—In the middle of the day we reached Hsin-Ti, a somewhat anomalous place, for although it has not the rank of a town, it is of so much importance and trade that it is presided over by a Tao-Tai.

There are in China only four other places, not towns, that are in a similar way the seats of a Tao-Tai.

Hsin-Ti (Sing-Ti of Blakiston's map) is a large straggling place about two miles long, but with no depth back from the river. Here there were a number of the picturesque Chinese gun-boats. Their form is exceedingly graceful, the upper works having a good sheer at the bow, and even more at the stern, on which a small house is built for the commanding officer. Over the body of these vessels, when at anchor, there is a little tent of blue and white striped cotton; and with their gay red banners and streamers they look very bright and cheerful.

We stopped here some time, as our old lady wanted to buy something; so we sent ashore for some white, blue, and red cotton to fasten round the cabin, and hide the rugs which we had hung up as draught-excluders.

February 16.—The view from our ship had been for some time limited to a bank of mud, thirty feet high, but about noon we arrived at a rocky bluff, where a little hill rose up out of the plain. From the top there was a fine view of the noble river here, three quarters of a mile wide, winding through a great plain, where broad lagoons lay stretched out amongst fields that were protected from the summer floods by extensive dykes and embankments. A village nestled among some few trees at the foot of the hill, and away in the distance to the south there was a fine mountain covered with snow.

I walked on from here, picking up a few teal, although surrounded by a crowd of little boys, who exhibited the imitative power that is so prominent a feature in the Chinese character by the quick way in which they caught the words I used in calling the dog, and as I left I could hear them shouting to one another in excellent English to 'come here.'

February 17.—We passed the entrance to the Tung-Ting lake. The Chinese consider the river that flows through this lake the main branch, and the stream that comes from Ch'ung-Ch'ing a tributary. This is because they measure the magnitude of a river by the amount of traffic on it.

We both noticed that beyond this point the number of boats we passed was very much less than lower down.

During the summer, the river overflows its banks and floods the surrounding country. There are extensive lines of embankment from one to two miles inshore, and all the villages are behind the inner line. This gives a dreary appearance to the landscape; and the traveller, walking for hours without seeing a village or meeting a human being, might easily be misled into the belief that he was in an uninhabited country.

February 18–22.—These days afford nothing to record. The 20th was a fortunate day, for Camel Reach, twenty miles long, lay before us, running nearly due north and south, and, a southerly wind favouring us, we ran the whole distance before it to Shang-Chê-Wan.

There were a great many villages in the neighbourhood, which seemed in a very flourishing and well-to-do condition. The country was closely cultivated, the fields were protected by splendid embankments,

and as the snow had now all melted the young crops coming up looked fresh and green.

February 23.—At Chien-Li-Hsien-Ma-Tou. We did not get under way in the morning, and on inquiring the reason, the sailors pointed out the masts of a junk about a hundred yards away, and asked us if we thought it could be safe to go on when there had been a squall violent enough to sink a junk.

February 24.—The next morning our crew still refused to move; they declared that the sight of the wrecked junk frightened them; and although there was a light and favourable breeze they said that they could not tell what the weather might be by-and-by, because it was cloudy, and they could not see the sky. They added that the other junks had not started, and it was quite contrary to custom to get under way before other people. The threat of an appeal to our official at length overcame their reluctance, and once we were off the rest of the fleet followed.

February 25.—There had been more snow during the night, but the morning was beautifully fine; every one was early astir, and the whole fleet was under way before seven o'clock.

It is a busy scene when a large number of junks are tracking together. Now an ambitious captain thinks he can shoot his vessel in front of another inshore, and tries to pass his tracking rope over the mast-head of his rival. This excites the jealousy of the crew, and if the tracking ropes foul, or the junks bump together, it rouses their anger.

The two captains then mount to the highest parts of the deckhouses, swear at one another, stamp their feet and shake their fists, both crews in the meantime shouting directions to the coolies on shore; but as they all talk at once, down to the smallest children,

they are not generally very successful in making themselves understood. Then the confusion is tremendous ; a track rope is unexpectedly tightened, and one or other of the vessels heels over so much that she is in danger of foundering. At last the junks shake themselves clear, but by pure good fortune, management having played a most insignificant part in the manœuvres. After they have been out of hearing of one another for some time the captains leave off swearing ; but should accident again bring them together, the skippers at once mount to their elevated positions, and the commination service begins afresh.

Although the trackers are often a quarter of a mile away from the boat, and at that distance the people on board naturally find it very difficult to make themselves heard, and though there is often such a crowd of junks whose crews are all shouting together, that it would seem impossible for any coolie to distinguish the orders meant for himself, yet they never attempt to introduce a code of signals. It is customary, however, in the rapids, higher up the river, to use a drum, the coolies pulling as long as the drum beats, and stopping when it ceases.

February 26.—I was ashore in the afternoon about a mile below Parson's Point, and seeing some teal in a creek I went toward them. Just at this moment I unexpectedly heard a shot, and found four men with a gun twelve feet long, the bore of which was about one and a half inches in diameter.

They had a framework, covered in front with rushes, behind which they hid themselves until some unwary birds came near enough to shoot, when they fired away about a pound of rusty iron shot of all shapes and sizes. At the last discharge, though there had been some thirty or forty birds to fire at, they

had only succeeded in bagging three, and besides these they had no more than five to represent the day's work.

I offered to buy them, and walked on with the men to the shore, where there were half a dozen regular gunning punts, each with a long gun. They had only a few geese and ducks amongst them all, and it seems difficult to understand how they can get a livelihood out of their sport, for their powder and shot, though of the most miserable description, costs what is to them a good sum of money, and they cannot sell geese to any but the very poorest, for no Chinaman cares to eat a wild goose, except to keep himself from starving.

February 27.—We made very slow progress in the morning, for even close in-shore the current at this part of the river is very swift, and the shoals run out half-way across. We grounded on the mud several times, and the trackers were so far off they could do but little good in the strong tide that swept across the shallows.

The country here is closely cultivated, protected by fine embankments, and the villages are very numerous. But the banks of the river are being swept away, and for a long distance we could see that a breadth of about six feet must have fallen in quite recently. There is a great bend between Last Bottle Reach and No Beer Channel, where two points on the river are separated by a neck of land not more than three quarters of a mile broad, the distance between them by the river being about fifteen miles. This neck must become more narrow each year, for the river sweeps down on to it at both sides. Blakiston represents it as one and a half miles across in his time.

There can be little doubt that in a few years it will be cut through, and become the channel.

The day was very pleasant; and the crops coming up, and the birds just appearing on the willow trees, together with a delicious feeling in the air, made us hail with pleasure the advent of gentle spring.

On a wide sandbank, across the river, I could watch the movements of thousands of geese. There were no people or boats on that side, but the birds appeared very uneasy. In their movements they put me very much in mind of swallows flocking at the approach of winter, and I wondered if they were preparing to leave the country before the hot weather.

Every now and then they would get up with a great clamour, fly across the river, wheel round and round, and then return to the sandbank; they generally began calling just as they rose from the ground, but on one occasion they did not commence their hoarse croak until they were well in the air; and at the distance of about half a mile the simultaneous flapping of some thousands of big wings sounded like the report of a heavy gun very far away.

There were a great many porpoises in the river; these creatures ascend the Yang-Tzŭ nearly up to I-Ch'ang, 900 miles from the sea.

February 28.—There was a fair wind in the morning, and as the men sat on the forecastle, eating, drinking, and talking incessantly, they 'whistled for the wind' as Europeans do; it is rather curious to find this practice so universal.

On an occasion like this, when the wind relieved them of their work, they used thoroughly to enjoy the unaccustomed treat of eating their meals in a leisurely manner.

They used generally to get up at a quarter past

five, and roll up their blankets, and take down the framework and matting with which the front deck was always covered in at night. The start was usually effected immediately after this, and by seven o'clock the cook and cook's mate had prepared a gigantic bucket of rice and a few vegetables.

The ship was then anchored for ten minutes, during which time the coolies would manage to eat each two or three basins of rice.

In the middle of the day, a quarter of an hour was allowed for a similar meal; but at night, when work was over, they could spend as long a time as they liked over their supper.

Nine-tenths of the food of these coolies was rice boiled perfectly plain; they would eat some chopped vegetables with it, cooked in a great deal of grease; and when by chance we shot a gull, a crane, or other strange bird, it afforded them the rare luxury of meat; but the proportion of rice to all their other food was so large that the amount of grease they ate was not very considerable, though all their little luxuries, such as a bit of ancient fish, or a lump of fat pork, were cooked in large quantities of grease.

Rice is a food that is not well adapted for men doing hard physical work, except where it is so cheap that large quantities can be eaten at a less cost than a smaller proportion of more nourishing food, and in travelling it is very striking to note that the very day on which the rice-growing country is quitted, some other grain at once becomes the food of the people; rice is so bulky that even one day's carriage makes it too costly for any but the well-to-do.

The grease eaten by the coolies, far from being an unaccountable taste, is an absolute necessity; no man can live without grease in some form or another,

least of all those doing hard physical work on rice for their staple food.

About half our coolies were opium smokers, but whether it was owing to the active life in the fresh air, or to the weakness of the drug they used, it did not seem to do them any harm.

We stopped to-day at Huo-Hsüeh (Ho-Hia of Blakiston), a straggling town along the river side. Many of the houses are built on bandylegged-looking poles resting on the steep bank, and when the river is high, they must be unpleasantly near the water.

There are remains of a masonry embankment, but now it is little more than a heap of loose stones.

March 1.—We reached Sha-Shih in the evening.

March 2.—In the neighbourhood of Sha-Shih, the country is very carefully embanked against the depredations of the river, the embankments in many places being faced with stone; and although it is the general custom in China never to repair anything, there were large gangs of men employed in restoring these.

March 3.—The country now began to change in appearance; the level of the ground was well out of reach of the river, even in its highest floods, and hills appeared in the distance on both sides.

I went ashore and walked through the large town of Tung-Shih, where I was followed by a somewhat excited crowd of people, one or two mischievous boys throwing stones. After I had passed it, as I saw the 'Kestrel' in the distance coming down the river, I hired a sampan. All the inhabitants of the town now wanted to come with me, and as many as could jumped into the sampan, and settled themselves down for a pleasure trip at my expense. The boatman, however, did not like this any better than I did myself, and he soon turned them out. The captain of the

'Kestrel' could not stop, but threw us a rope; but owing to the stupidity of my boatman, who had never seen a steamer before, one of her boats broke our mast off short, let the sail into the water, and threatened to capsize us. The boatman was quite scared, and looked on helpless, until with the help of Chang-Erh I pulled the sail into the boat for him, and even then he scarcely recovered his senses.

I only had time to accept an invitation to dinner and return to our junk.

When I called for the bill of the broken mast, I found it amounted to only an equivalent of about half-a-crown of our money, and the boatman was overjoyed with the magnificent payment of a thousand cash.

Baber and I then turned out our portmanteaus, and having made ourselves presentable by the addition of unwonted collars, we hired another sampan and set off down the river after the 'Kestrel,' ordering our captain in the meanwhile to go on as far as she could, for we knew that we should always be able to overtake her. We soon boarded the gunboat and heard all the news. They had found the river much lower than was anticipated; indeed it happened that this year the water was unusually low, so much so that the captain of the 'Kestrel' had given up all attempts to reach I-Ch'ang.

We both of us thoroughly enjoyed the good companionship and hospitality of our naval friend, and were sorry when, at half-past ten, we were obliged to say good-bye and push off in the sampan.

The night was cold, and as the stars were shining brilliantly, we took a brisk walk for half an hour, to warm ourselves before settling ourselves into the boat. After we each had smoked another cigar, Baber sug-

gested going to bed. The operation was a simple one, as we had nothing more to do than to exchange our sitting for a recumbent posture on the bottom boards of the boat.

Sleeping on a plank in a hat with a stiff brim is not altogether a very luxurious method of taking rest, but, nevertheless, like the 'sea boy on the giddy mast,' we found our 'eyes sealed up' by 'nature's soft nurse,' and our senses were soon 'steeped in forgetfulness.'

At about three o'clock in the morning the boatmen said they would go and look for our junk; but as we all knew she was up the river, and they started down, it was evident that they had some ulterior motive, in all probability a village at no great distance.

March 4.—At four o'clock, being very cold, Baber and I decided to look for our vessel ourselves, and disembarking we walked along the bank in the fine clear moonlight. Nearly everything was asleep, except the dogs, who barked furiously as we walked through a small town, and one or two early boatmen just lighting their fires. We reached our junk at half-past five, found a warm room and a cup of hot chocolate, and turned into our comfortable beds.

We had now left the vast and monotonous alluvial plain of the lower Yang-Tzŭ, and were fairly in the hills. The ground was well cultivated, and the crops, which seemed to be growing by magic, were very green. Temples and pagodas here are perched on the highest points. Comfortable-looking farmhouses nestle in the hollows, surrounded by small bamboo copses. Children in the dirt, with pigs and dogs, play about the doors, where the women sit sewing and talking. On the hill-sides there are little clumps

of cedars and firs, or patches of long grass; dog violets are in blossom at the sides of the path, and the flowers of great fields of rape shine as brilliant streaks of yellow in the distance. The grand river, still half a mile wide, now clear and almost green, rolls below the cliffs of red sandstone, and numerous junks going up and down lend life and animation to the scene.

The old lady took a horse in the morning, and rode off to I-Ch'ang, and the boatmen, anxious to get there also as soon as possible, made a long day's journey to I-Tu, where we moored amongst a number of other boats.

Sitting after dinner, with open windows, a man in a junk alongside said something I did not understand, when, to my astonishment, Baber took a header out of the window, and 'went for that heathen Chinee.' The man, however, escaped, and when Baber returned through the door, he explained that the object of his wrath had called us devils.

Another man presently came, and resting his arms on the window stood calmly gazing at us. At last Baber politely asked him what he was looking at. Not in the least abashed, he quietly replied, 'I am looking at you sitting down,' an eminently matter-of-fact reply, very characteristic of the Chinese character.

March 5.—I took a walk in-shore to-day over the hills, about 600 feet high. Directly the river is left, even by half a mile, the thinness of the population becomes apparent. Here the cultivation was only in the valleys, all the slopes and the tops of the hills being covered with beautiful long grass and low scrub. During a walk of more than two hours I scarcely saw a house, and did not meet half a dozen people.

After a time I returned to the river, and through a telescope saw the junk sailing away before a fresh breeze.

I did not particularly wish to walk to I-Ch'ang, because I had heard from the officers of the 'Kestrel' that there had been some sort of disturbances there, and I had no wish to get into an unpleasant hooting crowd, if I could help it. So I told Chung-Erh to try and engage a boat. There was some difficulty about this, as all the boats belonged to fishermen, who did not care to do anything out of their accustomed ways; but I presently fell in with a small junk, full of traders, carrying cotton up to I-Ch'ang; they were very civil people, and took me on board.

They looked at my gun and cartridges, for which they did not care much; but my telescope was a source of great merriment. They knew well enough what it was, though one and all completely failed to manipulate it. First one man took it, and the others eagerly asked him what he saw. After having pointed the glass steadily at the sky for some time, he answered in a doubtful sort of way that he could not see much; at which his friends jeered him, and made him give up the glass to the next man, who took it with a most superior air, as much as to say, 'Ah, just let me show you how to do it!' But after putting it out of focus, and looking straight into the bottom of the boat, he tried to see the inside of the telescope, and passed it on with a shrug of his shoulders, distinctly under the impression that it was stuffed up. The third man, after I had again focussed it, chiefly poked it into the eyes of everybody else, and knocked their hats off, at which he was voted a nuisance.

Then the evening closed in, and under the shelter

of the straw covering we had tea, and smoked until we arrived at I-Ch'ang.

When I entered the cabin of our junk I was warmly congratulated on my safe arrival by a voice from a vast collection of opened newspapers. Careful search revealed Baber hidden in the product of three mails, and in answer to my question, he explained that his hearty reception was caused by my escape from the mob of I-Ch'ang, who at this time were very turbulent, so much so that the newly appointed consul had deemed it prudent to send out a strong escort to look for me.

I then learnt all the news. There was now a considerable European community at I-Ch'ang. The English consul and his vice; the chief of the Chinese customs with two assistants; the captain of a river steamer, who was up here to prospect, and three missionaries. The chief commissioner of customs had been the first to arrive, and after him the consul had come in the 'Kestrel,' to choose a site for the English settlement. At first they found the people civil and obliging; they were never annoyed in any way, and used to walk about anywhere and everywhere. The consul selected a piece of ground, made the necessary agreements, ordered the boundary stones, thought that everything was comfortably settled, and was going to mark out the concession, when the aspect of affairs changed completely.

There was amongst the richer classes, and especially amongst the literati, a strong anti-European feeling. A report was spread that land was to be taken without payment, and other slanderous tales were invented by which the minds of the easily excited Chinese population were inflamed. One day, without previous warning, the consul was unexpectedly

mobbed and insulted, and after that no European was able to walk on shore without an escort.

Such was Baber's news, and I heartily congratulated myself on the fortunate rencontre with the traders' junk.

March 6.—We were obliged to stop at I-Ch'ang for a couple of days. The vessels wanted recaulking, some fresh rigging was required, and above all a new crew; for the navigation of the Yang-Tzŭ above I-Ch'ang is very different to the simple tracking below, and the shoals, rocks, and rapids, some of which are very dangerous, require a very skilful and practised crew.

We were escorted from I-Ch'ang by a petty official named Sun, and by one of the picturesque gunboats, the commander of which came to pay his respects to Baber, and knocked his head against the ground in humble manner. He afterwards moored his vessel by the side of ours, a proceeding which though it increased our dignity had its disadvantages, for the crew were most regular in their watches, and always relieved guard to the sound of a very powerful drum. No sooner had we closed our eyes in bed, than they would begin with a few gentle taps, which gradually swelled into a grand roll, ending in an extraordinary flourish. The noise would cease for a moment, and turning in bed, fond hopes would arise that it was over, when, with a sudden clang that penetrated into the inmost recess of the nerves, the drumming would recommence with redoubled violence. Even if habit be second nature, it would take a man a lifetime to get accustomed to the noises made on board a Chinese gunboat; but Baber metamorphosing a French proverb, remarked, '*Il faut souffrir pour être grand.*'

CHAPTER VI.

THE GORGES OF THE GREAT RIVER.

The I-Ch'ang Mob—Chinese Unreason—Departure from I-Ch'ang, and Adieu to English Faces—The Gorges Entered—Vicissitudes of Ascent—Scenery of the Gorges—Preparation for the Rapids—Ascent of Rapids—Difficulties of Nomenclature—Puzzles of Orthography—Yang-Tzŭ Life-boats—Dangers of the Rapids—View at Ch'ing-Tan—Ch'ing-Tan Rapid—Waiting our Turn—Pilots of the Rapid—Successful Ascent—Kuei-Chou—Its Means of Support Obscure—Mode of Tracking—Coal Districts Entered—The She-Skipper's History—Cave of the Cow's Mouth—Expedition in the Hills—Position of Pa-Tung—Long Gorge of Wu-Shan—Weird and Gloomy Aspect—Oracular Rock Disks—Cave Habitations—Rough Scrambling—Opium hostile to Bees—Town of Wu-Shan—Perplexing Eddies—Kuei-Chou-Fu—A Visitor, and his Monstrous Torrent of Speech—Method of Local Salt Manufacture—The Kuei-Chou Aqueduct—Credulity and Untruth—Civility of Ssŭ-Ch'uan Folk—Troubles in the Rapids—River Wall of Miao-Chi—Great Haul of Fish—City of Yun-Yang—Extraordinary Richness of Soil—Importance of Rape Cultivation—Chinese Skill in Agriculture overrated—Their True Excellence is in Industry—Ample Farmsteads—Rock of Shih-Pao-Chai—Story of Miraculous Rice-Supply—Luxuriant Vegetation—'Boat Ahoy'—The Ch'ung-Shu Flowers—St. George's Island—Cataplasm for a Stove-in Junk—The River of Golden Sand at Last—Fu-Chou—A Long Chase—Effort to Reach Ch'ung-Ching—The Use of the Great Sculls—Arrival at Ch'ung-Ching.

March 7.—The governor-general of the province had come up here to arrange matters with our consul; but he went away two days after our arrival, either because he would not take the trouble to arrange matters, or because he was afraid of the responsibility of failure. No doubt he thought that things were going wrong, and in plain English his departure would have been called running away.

When he left, of course all the people in the neighbourhood who had spare gunpowder let off guns.

At about ten o'clock the consul went ashore again with the Tao-Tai, attended by the other chief Chinese officials, and escorted by a regiment of braves.

They were at once surrounded by a yelling mob; and as the officials and braves were quite unable to quell the disturbance, they retired to a temple.

On the way they succeeded in making prisoners of two men who appeared to be ringleaders, and these they carried off.

When they were inside the walls of the buildings, one of the officials walked up and down, stamping and calling the people of I-Ch'ang by all the vile epithets he could think of.

The clamour outside now induced the officials to give up their prisoners. It had much the same effect as a pot of Liebig amongst a pack of wolves.

After awhile a retreat was determined on; and the whole party returned to the landing-place, amidst a shower of dirt, stones, brickbats, and tiles.

On the way the Tao-Tai lost his temper, and stamping with rage said to the mob, 'Here I am, why don't you kill me at once, and be done with it?'

The mob either had no reason in particular, or did not care to give one, and the party advanced without a reply to the question.

The Tao-Tai still showed a bold front, until he was suddenly met by a hideous old woman with a ladle of filth; this was too much, for the awful nature of a ladle of filth in China can hardly be conceived.

When they again reached the shore, we could see the performance from our boat. About a hundred little boys led the procession hooting and shouting

'Foreign devil!' Next came a dozen braves in red clothes armed with gingalls.

The vice-consul followed under the protection of a gigantic brave from the north of China, with whose enormous strides he vainly attempted to keep step.

After them the consul was walking with the Tao-Tai, who seemed rather glad to discard his red official canopy.

Behind all was the howling mob; and the remainder of the braves were scattered about amongst the crowd.

The party regained the boats without a very serious butcher's bill; the vice-consul lost a button from his coat; and one of the braves was cut by a stone. He smeared the blood all over his face, and with this ghastly aspect rushed to the Tao-Tai and demanded an indemnity of ten taels.

There are no people more easily led than the Chinese, by those who have fairly established an influence over them; ordinarily, too, they are exceedingly respectful and obedient to authority.

If instances were wanting, the way in which Gordon could do what he liked with his Chinese army, shows how powerful in the minds of a Chinaman is the instinct to follow those who can lay claims to his fidelity.

But it sometimes happens that in large towns some rich family may get more influence than the officials, especially if the latter are very corrupt or extortionate. This was the case at I-Ch'ang, where a family named Fu were believed to be the chief leaders of the people, and the instigators of the disturbance.

The Chinese are, moreover, eminently an unreasoning people; the movements of a mob everywhere are dictated rather by caprice than reason. It is very

easy too to raise the devil of popular wrath, but it is generally a more difficult matter to allay it; and later, although it was supposed that the Fu family were desirous of doing so, they were quite unable to quiet the populace.

The extraordinary ideas that penetrate a Chinese mob of course help to make their conduct inexplicable.

Here they had a notion that our consul was the brother-in-law of our Queen, and agreed that, for that reason, it would not be proper to injure him. Although it is difficult to trace the logic in this reasoning, it shows the respect of the Chinese generally for high authority, even under circumstances where it would be least anticipated.

The Chinese are very superstitious, and will readily believe anything that is told them.

There is a rock a little below I-Ch'ang said to resemble the tooth of a tiger, and therefore called the Tiger's Tooth. The Chinese are firmly persuaded that it will be quite impossible for foreigners to come to I-Ch'ang, because they say the tiger will eat the sheep; the word '*Yang*' meaning indifferently 'foreigner' or 'sheep' (there is a slight difference in the written character, but absolutely none in the pronunciation). This may appear ludicrous to a Western mind; but an educated Chinaman can in all seriousness believe this, and many things much more marvellous.

March 8.—The officials at length managed to effect some sort of compromise between the rioters and the Europeans, and the boundary-stones were successfully put up; after which the consul left for Hankow.

We saw the blood of the cock duly sprinkled on the bows of the boat, and our skipper and her crew were very busy making preparations: taking on board

great quantities of ropes of all sorts and sizes, some of bamboo and some of hemp; strong stanchions had been put up on the gunwale on both sides, to act as thole-pins for large strong oars.

Then the forward rudder was arranged.

This is a very strong oar, some forty feet long, which projects thirty feet beyond the bow. At the inboard end, ropes are fastened, so that some half-dozen men can assist in the steering; and thus a very powerful steering apparatus is formed.

I-Ch'ang seemed to be a cheap place for cabbages, for the crew brought on board an enormous cargo. There is a peculiarity in the market of I-Ch'ang that I never heard of elsewhere; for the price of things never varies, but when they are dear or cheap, there are more or fewer ounces to the pound!

Before leaving we found a carpenter who was able to fix glass into the windows of our cabin, and as we succeeded in buying a couple of panes we very much increased our comfort.

March 9.—This morning all English faces were left behind, and from this time, until my arrival at Bhamo in November, I saw no European save my travelling companions and the French missionaries.

With many a hearty shake of the hand we said good-bye to the customs officers. At 7.30 the mooring lines were let go, and as the entrance to the gorges loomed before us, we seemed to have cast loose the last rope that bound us to civilisation.

After having been so long slowly winding up the tortuous reaches of the river, gliding through the alluvial plain, where there is scarcely anything to relieve the monotony of the landscape, the sudden change in the scenery that appears beyond I-Ch'ang is very striking.

The river soon narrows to a width of from 400 to 500 yards. Steep spurs from mountains 3,000 feet high run right down to the water's edge; their sides, wherever they are not absolutely perpendicular, covered with long orange-brown grass, that seems to grow almost without any soil. On the more gentle slopes terrace cultivation is carried on, little patches of the most brilliant green, sometimes a thousand feet above the river, and looking almost overhead, showing the presence of some industrious farmer, who will not leave a square yard uncultivated if he can help it.

Sometimes the hills are broken into precipices, rising 300 feet sheer up from the water, beneath which the river runs with a glassy surface; at others there are loose piles of *débris* or gigantic masses of rock strewn about the bed, where the water dashes in wild confusion.

Now and then a cleft in the hillside discloses a tiny stream leaping from rock to rock amongst ferns, long overhanging shrubs, and brambles.

Once the steep slopes running up a thousand feet were crowned at the top by a grim wall of white cliffs 300 feet high and about a couple of miles long, and looking up a valley, pine forests could be seen on the northern slopes of the snow-capped mountains.

Nor is it the change in scenery alone that causes a feeling of strangeness, but the mode of travelling itself combines to give a sense almost of bewilderment.

Now there is no foothold for a goat at either side. The trackers come on board, and we have to row, five oars on each side pulled by ten lusty coolies, shouting to encourage themselves and mark the time. With each stroke of the sweeps the boat creaks and shakes, and from cliff to cliff, before and behind us, are echoed the regular cries of many boatmen, all urging their

vessels against the rapid stream. Suddenly the cadence ceases, a confused babel of tongues swells in loud disorder, and looking out, we find the trackers are being put ashore, the crew of every boat struggling to get before that of another.

Every man with a different idea about the way something ought to be done, and proclaiming it as loud as he can, tries to shout down all the rest. The noise increases, and seems to peal from one end of the long reach to the other—when suddenly all on board is still; we glide smoothly along, not a plank or a beam giving out a note of straining, but away ashore, quite softened down by distance, we still can hear the regular cry of the coolies, as keeping step they draw us quietly along.

Now the towpath comes to an end, and the coolies must again come on board, but this time in a sampan, as here the vessel cannot run ashore. Now we cross the river to a path that runs up till the trackers look right over the mast-head. But one thing is never wanting at a critical moment, nor when the wild chorus of shouts is at its loudest; for above the din, whatever it may be, the shrill tones of the old woman at the stern rise in hideous discord.

In the afternoon we made fast to one of the big rocks lying about, near some level ground in the bed of the river, where people living in a few small temporary huts were doing a little trade by selling odds and ends to the boatmen who stop here to rest. Stepping ashore we find little choice in the walks. There is but one path, and that soon leads to a zigzag track up the mountain side. We follow up, but every now and then lose it, and have to clamber about with hands and feet from one rock to another, till we unexpectedly come upon a hut, perched on a tiny artificial plateau,

surrounded by a few bamboos, orange trees, and a fir or two. Our sudden appearance startles a couple of fowls, who rush off cackling to a safe refuge by the fire inside. The never-absent dog comes out to see what is the matter, and does not cease barking until our retreating forms disappear behind some gigantic rock. Up we clamber, our protecting minions from the gunboat puffing and panting as they wonder why the mad foreigners want to be always going up hill. At length we reach a projecting point, where a bit of flat rock gives us a comfortable seat, and almost underneath us, a thousand feet below, the river, dwarfed by the distance, looks no more than fifty yards wide. To the south and west, the hills rise in masses one behind another; mountains backed up by mountains, higher and yet higher, one giant leaning lovingly on the shoulder of the next, till as we gaze towards the setting sun, with the eye of fancy we can see them range beyond range, stretching far over the borders of the Chinese empire, and at length culminating in the mighty peaks of the Himalayas.

March 10.—It was raining the next morning, and as the trackers could not move over the slippery rocks we remained at anchor, the fragrant perfume of bean flowers being wafted in at the window from the fields surrounding a little hamlet opposite.

The crops seemed almost to be growing visibly: but a few days previously everything was covered with snow, and now the trees were budding and the green wheat was a foot high.

In the afternoon the rain cleared off, and we reached the little village of Huang-Ling-Miao, where the valley has a wild and savage aspect, and where the track along the river bank is strewn with gigantic boulders brought down, when the river is in flood,

from the far distant and unknown recesses of the mountain ranges.

March 11.—It was a dull morning when the usual stir amongst the boatmen awakened me. Soon after I was up, as we were rounding a projecting point, the current twisted the boat's head, and notwithstanding the tracking line, and forward steering apparatus, we spun round like a top until our bows pointed down the river. Matters, however, were soon righted, but we immediately afterwards anchored, as a storm of sleet and snow came down, wrapped everything in mist, and hid the view. Fierce squalls of wind from every point of the compass blew down our chimney, sent tongues of flames from the stove darting across the room, and made matters generally unpleasant.

It cleared up later, and in the afternoon we reached the lower end of the Ta-Tung rapid, where we were obliged to anchor again to await our turn.

In the meantime the usual bamboo tracking-line was cast off, and a strong hempen one substituted, and our old skipper, after much talking, concluded a bargain with the extra coolies required to help us up the rapid.

At the foot of all the serious rapids there are a number of temporary shanties erected—temporary, for the ground on which they stand is under water during the floods of summer.

Coolies who come up here for the winter and spring live in these, and make a livelihood by assisting the ascending junks to pass the rapids, for a large junk may require an extra hundred of coolies to haul her up.

Amongst these hired coolies there is always one who, owing to his skill, is a person of such importance

that he is often saluted with an explosion of crackers when he first comes on board.

At length our turn arrives. We have now only five men left on the forward deck; four of these, picked for their nerve and experience, stand to the forward steering apparatus, and the fifth squats down with the drum between his knees; all give one anxious glance round to see that everything is right; the signal is given, the drum is beaten with a regular cadence, the coolies ashore shout as the rope tightens to their pull, and in a moment we are in the rapid. The water boils and foams about us, and leaps now and then up at the bow, as if it would engulph us; but we steadily ascend; inch by inch we make our way; the coolies ashore attending carefully to the signals given by changing the cadence of the drum.

Now it is interesting to watch the movements of the agile coolie, who was received with so much respect; he seems to combine the activities of a goat and a fish.

The bed of the river is strewn with granite boulders, some as large as a small house; the tracking line catches in an uncompromising corner of one of them, in an instant the naked coolie—for he has disembarrassed himself of every shred of clothing—is at the top, and the line is clear. Now, behind a ledge of rocks there is a backwater, and he has to swim across it to disentangle the rope from the mast of a fishing-boat anchored in the rushing torrent; and again, active as he is, he is on shore only just in time to save the rope from another rock.

Little by little, though it seems slow work, the end is approached. At last, after three quarters of an hour, we pass the two hundred yards, and glide round a rock, into a pool of still, calm water, where our

coolies receive the congratulations of their friends, and we anchor for the night.

March 12.—The commandant of our gunboat was very fond of firing salutes in our honour; the starting gun awakened me early, and I heard the voice of his pet lark trilling merrily to the daybreak.

We were looking straight up the Niu-Kan gorge. In the distance a glorious mountain towered above us, seeming double its real height from the clouds that hung around its sides, and left only its summit clear against the sky. Cliffs two hundred to three hundred feet high bounded the river on either hand, the hill-sides glowed in the rich colouring of browns and deep orange reds, and the huge boulders lying about gave a savage grandeur to the scene.

The people here call the river the Ta-Cha-Ho, which *means* the river of lees or dregs, a most appropriate name, for the *whole* bed is strewn with *débris* brought down *from* the far distant mountains.

For anyone who does not know the written language, it is most difficult to obtain the proper name of any place in China.

The country people have often a vile pronunciation; and even when a name is pronounced correctly, it is very difficult for a European unacquainted with Chinese to catch the sound. When I afterwards travelled by myself, I adopted and carried out a suggestion made to me by Baber, that I should have the names of the places written in Chinese either by the innkeeper or by some other local *savant*.

Baber himself translated for me with infinite care the names of all places between Ch'ung-Ch'ing, Ch'êng-Tu, and Sung-P'an-T'ing; and since my return to England, Mr. Johnson, of Her Majesty's Consular Service, has been most kind, and spared no pains in

the translation of the names on the road from Ch'êng-Tu to Bhamo.

Thus I have been able to produce the names of all the principal places, written in Roman characters, on the system invented by Sir Thomas Wade.

A case occurred here that shows the difficulty of obtaining a name correctly. After having the name of a place repeated to me several times, I wrote it down as Tung-Ling; the old woman who told me drawing her hand round her throat, by which she meant that Ling, which might have a hundred different significations, was the Ling that would be translated into English by the word 'collar.' When I interrogated Baber, I found that, notwithstanding the very great care he had always taken, and his knowledge of the Chinese language both written and spoken, on his last visit he had called it Lio-Lin, or willow-grove.

On questioning the old woman, Baber found out that she called it T'ou-Ling, or head and collar, on account of a rock in the river, surrounded by a circle of foam, that looked, so she said, like a head and collar. Baber, who never spared trouble to get anything properly done, now sent ashore, and found that the real name was Kung-Ling, or amphitheatre of hills.

Thus, for this place no less than three very different names had been given, and those not by strangers, but by people belonging to the neighbourhood.

Orthography of names is always a thorn in the side of, and often a terrible stumbling-block to, travellers in Eastern countries. More especially is this the case in China, where the language is full of delicate sounds almost undistinguishable by an unaccustomed European ear. Until quite recently the confusion was made worse by the English pronunciation of vowels; and it will not be until Hunter's system is fairly established

and understood that Englishmen will have any certainty of the correct orthoepy of the names even of places in our Indian Possessions.

The foreign pronunciation of vowels is now happily recognised; and for Chinese sounds Sir Thomas Wade has invented a system of orthography which has the advantage of being the only system that is, or ever has been, in existence; on its other merits I am not competent to form any opinion.

It is to be devoutly hoped that all future writers will, as far as possible, avail themselves of Sir Thomas Wade's system, so that the identification of places referred to by more than one writer may be certain: a feat of literary gymnastics sometimes almost impossible, as, for instance, when one writes 'Show,' and another 'Hsiao' for the same word!

On arriving at the foot of the next rapid, a very ominous sight presented itself to us. Stranded on a rock, with the water boiling and foaming around it, was half of a junk, which coming down the river four days before had driven her stern on to the pitiless ledge. In a very short time the furious stream had broken off the fore part of the vessel, and left the remainder, an object of terror to the superstitious sailors. No lives were lost, and the greater part of the cargo was saved; but the grim and shattered relic, with a coil of rope and a bundle of cabbages still lying on the after-house, formed a warning to rash navigators in the dangerous rapid.

To make the scene more thrilling there were a couple of life-boats paddling about close in amongst the rocks.

These are not life-boats in our sense of the word, as to floatation, but they are as to saving life. Strongly built, they are manned by a picked crew of six soldiers,[5]

[5] The Chinese make little distinction between sailors and soldiers.

and stationed at the dangerous places, to rescue any unfortunates from a wrecked junk that may be struggling in the water. The boats are painted red, and have some characters written on them. The men wear the usual blue trousers, blue tunic, and the blue Ssŭ-Ch'uan turban. Over the blue tunic there is a yellowish drab coat without sleeves; and on the front and back of this is a white circle inscribed with characters in red, indicating the company or camp to which the men belong.

They seemed to manage their boat in a quiet sailor-like fashion, and paddled steadily beside us as we went up. When once the junk was absolutely in a rapid our crew also worked very quietly; there was then always one guiding spirit, and until we had safely passed, everything was left to his judgment. But the moment the danger was over the shouting and noise began again, everyone trying to make up by louder vociferation than usual for the few minutes of enforced silence.

Ascending a rapid in a big boat is in fact an operation that requires the very nicest skill and judgment, and the most prompt and ready obedience to the smallest signal given by the commander. The very slightest error, or the smallest delay in executing an order, would often be fatal, and bring about a serious accident. The old lady never attempted to take charge under these circumstances, but generally the chief of the coolies she had hired at I-Ch'ang was in command, though, on some occasions, a pilot came on board with the extra coolies at the rapids.

Often the vessel will be driven violently ashore, or on to a rock, by an eddy, and to deaden the shock a simple kind of buffer is used. This is a very powerful spar on the starboard side, loosely lashed to

a stanchion on the bulwark. When in use the forward end is pushed a long way in front of and below the bow, and the united strength of three or four coolies, at the inboard end of the spar, takes the first shock and lessens the concussion of the boat, though often, notwithstanding this, the blow is very violent.

In this part of the river, the fishermen anchor their boats to a rock where the current is strongest, and where the water boils and swirls all round them.

There is only one man in a boat; he uses a long-handled scoop-net, which he pushes as deep into the water as he can, sweeping it down the river, and again to the surface, making about one stroke a minute.

A kind of carp is caught here, which is eatable, but not good, and which rarely exceeds eighteen inches in length.

We anchored at Ch'ing-Tan; and Baber and I went for a walk, or rather scramble, for the side of the hill sloped at an angle of 36°. Up this we clambered, with our hands, knees, and feet, to a height of 800 feet, where we found a zigzag that took us to the brow of a spur 1,300 feet above the river.

The view was magnificent; the setting sun just lit up the snow lying on the tops of the higher mountains; down below the shadows were of a deep and transparent blue, and the river seemed almost at our feet. The side of the mountain was cut into terraces; and little patches of wheat were springing up, but so small that they would seem insufficient to feed even the few inhabitants that are found here, living in miserable little shanties on a few yards of artificially levelled ground.

But it was already late, and we were compelled to tear our eyes away from the lovely scene, and use them for the more practical purpose of noting every

spot on which we put our feet as we descended the steep track.

We picked up a precocious juvenile as we were scrambling down, and Baber being hot gave him his hat to carry; the boy promptly put it on his head with a grin.

Baber said to him, 'I hope your head is clean.'

'Yes,' said he, 'I have no lice, nor fleas either; you can look if you like,' and taking off the hat, he held down his head for inspection.

About half-way to the bottom there was a ruined temple, at which the boy pointed and said, 'Ah! I think that would be the sort of place for a foreign house.' Foreigners were daily expected at almost every town of importance; and they would everywhere have been welcomed by the people, when not incited by the slanderous inventions of the literati.

There were a great number of orange-trees here, and another fruit-tree, called by the Chinese Pi-Pa (*Eriobotrya Japonica*).[6]

We were now anchored at the foot of the Ch'ing-Tan rapid, the worst of all the rapids on the Yang-Tzŭ, and in the still night air we could hear it roaring and rushing only fifty yards above us.

It is said that this rapid was caused by an enormous mass of the mountain falling into the river, and the date is somewhere given as very ancient; our official, however, told us that it occurred in the time of the Ming dynasty (from A.D. 1368 to 1644).

March 13.—When we looked out in the morning, the steep slope of the water was so apparent that it seemed as if it were impossible any boat could ascend it. Rocks cropped up in most unpleasant places, a

[6] Well known in India as the Loquot, from its Canton name, and in Italy as the Japanese *nespolo*, or medlar.—Y.

broad sheet of white foam extended right across, and the very fish were jumping and leaping in their efforts to ascend.

Our accompanying official, Sun, sent to say that he had no intention of risking his valuable life in any boat up that awful torrent; and that we had better follow his example, and not only walk up ourselves, but send our valuables also by land.

We, however, came to the conclusion that all our goods were equally valuable, and that unless we regularly unloaded the ship, we could do little good; and as for ourselves, we determined that the excitement of going up was worth any risk there might be. We thought, too, that if we remained on board the people might be more careful than if we went ashore.

There was a long time to wait before our turn came, and we watched a small junk make several attempts to ascend before finally succeeding; whilst a crowd of people gradually collected who had come to see the unwonted sight of two foreigners going up the rapid.

The shore was strewn with gigantic boulders, amongst which knots of Chinamen in their blue cotton clothes sat and stood in every conceivable attitude; some were perched on the tops of the rocks, others at the edge of the water were catching fish about the size of sprats, and little ragged and dirty boys had arranged themselves in artistic groups that Murillo alone could have painted.

A steep bank rose up thirty feet, on which the town was built, but the level ground was so scarce that the houses were obliged to seek extraneous aid, and support themselves on crooked and rickety-looking piles.

Beyond towered the giant mountains above an

almost perpendicular wall of rock that rose many hundreds of feet straight up from the river.

The ship was now lightened as much as possible by the removal of some of the heavy cargo; and all the morning was occupied in laying out warps. One, 400 yards long, led straight up the rapid; and two other safety ropes were made fast ashore, so that if the first and most important should have parted, we should have merely glided back whence we came, always provided that we did not strike one of the vicious-looking rocks whose wicked heads rose above the foam.

Just at this time a little sampan with two rowers and a helmsman came down, and it was really a fine sight. As they entered the broken water the boat disappeared altogether from view, and the fearless yet anxious look of the steerer was quite a study. A couple of seconds, and they were through, and floating in the smooth water below.

Presently a most important functionary came on board, a serious-looking man, with a yellow flag, on which was written, 'Powers of the water!! a happy star for the whole journey.'

This individual must stand in the bows and wave his flag in regular time; and if he is not careful to perform this duty properly, the powers of the water are sure to be avenged somehow. Another method of softening the stony hearts of these ferocious deities is to sprinkle rice on the stream all through the rapid; this is a rite that should never be omitted.

At this rapid it is necessary to take a pilot, and at three o'clock the chief pilot and his mate came on board. They were gentlemanly-looking men, dressed in light grey coats, and they gave their orders in a very quiet but decided manner. The pilot's mate was

certainly the most quiet and phlegmatic Chinaman I ever met; but these men have to keep their heads uncommonly cool. Directly they came on board our crew became very silent, with the exception of one hungry-looking coolie with a pair of breeches so baggy that he looked as if he could carry about all his worldly goods in them; but the severe looks thrown at him by the rest soon silenced him, and he seemed to subside into his capacious nether garments.

Just as all was ready a most ill-mannered junk put its head into my bedroom window, smashed it in, and threatened to do the same to the whole side of the deck-house. She was, however, staved clear, and eventually all damage was rectified with some paper and the never-failing pot of paste.

At half-past four our bows entered the foam. Everything creaked, groaned, and strained; the water boiled around us as we passed within a couple of feet of a black and pointed rock. The old ship took one dive into a wave, and water came on board at a rate that very soon would have swamped her; the drum was beaten and the flag waved; ashore the coolies (nearly one hundred of them) strained the rope, and their shouts could be heard above the roar of the foaming torrent; one line parted, and gave the vessel a jerk that made her shiver from stem to stern; but in ten minutes we were through, and anchored safely in smooth water.

Our small junk followed without much difficulty; the boat of our protector Sun received no more damage than the loss of her rudder; and our gunboat, a handy affair, making very light of it, we all at last found ourselves together above the dreaded spot.

Ropes were then to be coiled down, and our junk

made shipshape, before starting afresh and sailing through the Mi-Tsang gorge.

This is one of the most striking of all the gorges in the Yang-Tzŭ. Huge walls of rock rise up perpendicularly many hundreds of feet on either hand; the banks are strewn with *débris*; and where a gully or ravine opens up nothing is seen but savage cliffs, where not a tree, and scarcely a blade of grass, can grow, and where the stream, which is rather heard than seen, seems to be fretting in vain efforts to escape from its dark and gloomy prison. A fair breeze took us through the gorge, and we anchored for the night at the upper end.

March 14.—The next morning the commander of our gunboat fired his starting gun at six o'clock; and passing another insignificant rapid we arrived opposite the walled town of Kuei-Chou, whose officials came to visit Baber, bringing presents of fowls, ducks, and mutton, as a leg of goat, with a large bone and not much meat, was facetiously called.

The town of Kuei-Chou is a small place, but enclosed by a wall that runs up the side of a steep hill, and contains a considerable extent of open ground at the back, where, as is often the case in China, the people seem to like the idea of freedom, and build the greater part of their houses outside the wall. How the citizens of this flourishing place find a living it is difficult to say. There was very little cultivation around it, there were no junks stopping at it when we were there, and all the traffic passed by contemptuously on the other side. There were no fishing-boats belonging to it, and when there is neither commerce, agriculture, nor fishing, there are not many sources of wealth remaining. Baber said that it must live like a gentleman,—on its own private fortune!

In a report made by the delegates of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, they observe that many of the towns on the banks of the river thrive without agriculture, commerce, or other apparent means of livelihood. These delegates say that the people subsist upon piracy, and that when a junk is wrecked (as happens almost every day, when the river is in a flood), the coolies run away, and the inhabitants come down and appropriate the cargo.

This statement, however, should be received with caution, for it is not likely that piracy to such an extent would be permitted on the great highway of China. On this journey we ourselves passed several wrecks; in every case the cargo was safe ashore under the care of the coolies, who, in one instance, had built themselves temporary sheds of matting on the bank, and were living in a little encampment of their own, while the junk was being repaired.

I took a walk opposite Kuei-Chou, where the tracking path was cut out of the rock, and where in the steepest parts regular steps had been made. In many places the tracking line had cut deep grooves in the faces of the cliffs, and at one point, where a nasty projecting rock runs out into the river, rollers had been fastened for the ropes to work on. I came back just in time to see Sun and his boat swept down the stream. The tracking line had parted, an eddy spun the junk round, and the current carried her a mile, before the men on board could shoot her into the calm water close inshore.

During the day we went through two rapids, but in the low state of the water they were trifling, and the extra number of coolies employed was small.

The coolies fasten themselves to the tracking line in a very ingenious manner. They wear a sort of

cross-belt of cotton over one shoulder, the two ends are brought together behind the back, and joined to a line about two yards long. At the end of this line there is a sort of button or toggle, with which one half-hitch is taken round the tracking rope. As long as the strain is kept up, it holds; but if the coolie attempts to shirk his work, and slackens his line, the toggle comes unhitched, and his laziness becomes apparent to his comrades, and to the overseer or ganger who superintends the work.

This ganger is armed with a stick, and it is his duty, by shouting or gesticulating, to excite and encourage the men. He rushes about from one to another; sometimes he raises his stick high in the air over one of them, as if he were going to give him a sound thrashing, but bringing it down he gently taps his shoulders as a sign rather of approbation than of wrath.

When all the coolies are harnessed, they walk forward swaying their bodies and arms from side to side, and shouting a monotonous cry to keep the time. Sometimes the path where they can track is only twenty or thirty yards long, then as soon as a coolie arrives at the end he casts himself off, runs back to the other end, fastens himself on again, and begins pulling afresh.

During the day we entered the coal districts. The people here do little more than scratch the surface, and the coal they obtain is not of a very first-rate quality.

Whilst we sat at breakfast Baber's headman Hwu-Fu, who was waiting on us, was in an exceedingly merry frame of mind, so much so that even in the august presence of his master he was unable to contain his mirth. Baber wishing that we should

enjoy a share of the laughter, asked him what was the matter, and although he found his story so amusing that it was with difficulty he could tell it, yet Baber managed to extract from him some interesting episodes in the life of the old lady, the owner of our vessel.

She had been married some years previously, and was apparently able to exist in the society of her husband, until the river gods decided to wreck their vessel in a rapid.

The appalling spectacle so terrified the unfortunate man, that although he received no corporal injury, he died of fright.

The old lady shed a parting tear, and would have wiped the corner of her eye with her pocket-handkerchief, if she had had one; but soon after, finding the care of a big ship and a little child too much for her unaided self, she, whilst vowing to the shades of her departed spouse that it was an act of paramount necessity, and that no disrespect to him was meant, decided to take another helpmeet. Not being altogether destitute of this world's goods she found no difficulty, and at I-Ch'ang recommenced a married life. But whilst yet in the honeymoon at Hankow a slight difference of opinion ended in the husband falling down a well, calumny going so far as to say that she pushed him down; but, be that how it may, the lady returned home quietly, and would have been quite prepared for a widow's lot, if some meddlesome folk passing by had not pulled the man out, and sent him back not much the worse. The pair, however, thought that after this accident married life would possibly not be unmixed bliss; so giving him her blessing, or her curses, and endowing him with a small sum of money, the woman sent him to his home.

Again surrounded by a flattering crowd of admirers, she selected a husband for the third time, and they went back together to I-Ch'ang; but here evil-minded people told such wicked stories, that the husband ran away, and returned to Hankow by the first opportunity. Since that time she had been unable to get another spouse, and remained a widow.

After this interesting story Hwu-Fu went away, but presently returned with more information. He said he had heard of a place called Niu-K'ou, or the Cow's Mouth, where there was a cave, and where, he said, in ancient days a very remarkable cow used to drink, and although he did not know what it was, he was sure that there was something marvellous about the place, because he had been told so by a man who was upwards of eighty years of age.

Baber and I, not at all unwilling for a day in the country, decided that we would investigate the mystery, and we organised a picnic accordingly; and although soon afterwards it appeared that the oldest inhabitant after all knew only of a village called Niu-K'ou, where somebody had once said that there was a cave, still, as we had made up our minds for a walk, we did not alter our plans.

After this, Sun came to see Baber, and was very anxious that we should not leave the boats. He was, or pretended to be, afraid that something would happen to us; but whether he thought that we should meet with some accident, or be attacked by the inhabitants, was not very clear.

March 15.—Ordering the junk to go on up the river, we started on our expedition at seven o'clock, but Sun could not resist a last warning. He said we should be lost among the mountains; Baber said we had a compass and could find our way anywhere.

'Ah!' he answered, 'but you may fall down a precipice.'

'Then,' said Baber, 'you had better come with us and walk in front.'

He did not seem to understand this logic, and inconsequently remarked that we might be robbed by thieves.

'Not,' answered Baber, 'if I take two or three braves with me from the gunboat.'

'But there are wild beasts,' he added.

'I think not,' said Baber, who then politely waited for his next argument.

But he had exhausted his stock, so with a mournful sigh he let us depart.

Chin-Tai, Hwu-Fu, and Wang-Erh came with us, besides one or two people from the gunboat, and coolies to carry our guns and provisions.

We ascended a rather steep path by the side of a valley, where small farmhouses stood singly, each surrounded with bamboos and apricot trees, now in full blossom; and after crossing a saddle 2,600 feet above the river, a beautiful landscape lay before us.

We were standing on the crest of a hill that bounded a horse-shoe valley; on the slopes well-to-do farmhouses were standing by themselves amongst pine woods, through which a gentle breeze was rustling pleasantly, and in the distance fine ranges of mountains and vast snowfields could be seen. And although there was no cave or other curiosity, the view quite repaid us for our walk.

We had been told that there was a 'Tung,' or cave; but Tung may mean a variety of things, and amongst others an amphitheatre of hills, such as we were now looking down on; and the stories of the grotto serve to show the difficulties to be contended with when any information is wanted in this country.

We went down to a cottage, solidly built of mud, with a high gabled roof, where a polite old gentleman, the proprietor, made us welcome, and showed us into his chief room, a large and lofty apartment, with a mud floor not cleaner or more dirty than a Chinese room usually is. One wardrobe against the wall, a chair, a table, and a couple of small benches composed the furniture, and mottoes painted on long slips of red paper adorned the walls.

The kang of Northern China is an unknown institution in these parts, but some charcoal was burning in a hole in the floor, to which air was supplied by a small tunnel. We sat down here and had our breakfast, the family coming in, one or two at a time, to smoke a pipe and have a look at us; but they were all very civil and well-behaved, and in reply to Baber's question they said there were plenty of pheasants, but no deer, in the neighbourhood. We left these quiet folk, who had scarcely ever heard of a foreigner, and ascending again reached a point about 2,800 feet above the river. From here we walked on the crest of a long ridge, and presently met some people sent by the chief magistrate of Pa-Tung to look for and to pay their respects to Baber.

A very long zigzag took us to the riverside. We were ferried across, and on arrival at our junk, Sun professed himself immeasurably relieved to see us back again safe and sound after our perilous enterprise.

Pa-Tung seems placed in a very unsuitable position for a large town. Steep mountains about 3,000 feet high rise straight up behind, and, except the narrow paths and zigzags, there are no roads to it from anywhere. It is a long straggling place, with little depth, built about forty or fifty feet above the

water. There is no wall, and the houses that face the river have little patches of garden in front of them running down the steep bank, and, as is usual in these waterside towns where level ground is difficult to find, many of them are supported on piles.

March 16.—We now entered the Wu-Shan [7] gorge, the longest on the Yang-Tzŭ. In many places there were no tracking paths, and it was necessary to lay out a line with a sampan, make it fast to the point of some convenient rock, and then haul ourselves up.

The weather and water had here regularly honeycombed the faces of the limestone rocks, and in many places they looked like slag from some gigantic furnace.

We anchored for the night at Nan-Mu-Yuan (teak wood garden), a little village, the main street of which is a flight of irregular steps running some five hundred feet up one side of a very steep ravine; while on the opposite side of the rivulet that comes tumbling down, orange and apricot groves are interspersed amongst little patches of beans and wheat, planted wherever a level spot can be found or made.

I walked through this picturesque but uncomfortable hamlet, and, followed by a considerable number of people, continued the ascent of the very steep hill, passing a temple situated on a projecting point, amongst a clump of willows and fir trees, where most of the accompanying crowd found their muscles less strong than their curiosity; then through one or two hamlets, whose occupants took little heed of the strange

[7] Wu-Ngo-Nü was the enchantress of Mount Wu. The twelve peaks of this mountain were once twelve sisters; they raise clouds in the morning, and cause showers at evening, thus detaining travellers that they may remain overnight in the neighbourhood. This once happened to an emperor, who caused a tower to be erected there, called Yang-T'ai.—*Chinese Repository.*

visitor, till after a scramble amongst rocks and thorns, I gained the top of a ridge, 2,500 feet above the river, that commanded a fine view of the mountain ranges. Here I found myself alone, for the last of the boys who had followed me had found the ascent so severe, and the evening so warm, that after divesting themselves of nearly all their clothes, they had given it up in despair, and were waiting for me a few hundred feet below. They watched me keenly, and must have been much disappointed that I went through no more remarkable performance than an examination of my barometer, and then again came down the hill.

March 17.—We were still in the Wu-Shan gorge; here a wild chasm in the limestone rocks, where on the left bank the strata stand in an almost vertical position, and on the right are inclined at an angle of 45° below, turning over to a horizontal position up above.

On looking at these gigantic masses, which by some unknown force have been thus torn, it is easy to see that it is by some wonderful convulsion of nature, and not by the steady disintegration of a running stream, that these deep rents in the mountains have been formed.

The gloomy aspect of this gorge, shut in by high limestone mountains and precipices, where vegetation was scarce, and where a narrow streak of dull leaden sky was all that could be seen above, was enhanced by the solitude in which we now found ourselves, for we scarcely saw another vessel. There was something weird and mysterious in that long silent reach, where there seemed to be no room for life, and it was not difficult to understand how the superstitious fancies had arisen that had attached some mystical fable to almost every point.

On the left bank of the river in this gorge there is a sort of rough circle on the face of the cliff, where several layers of rock have, as it were, peeled off. The people say that with each succeeding dynasty a fresh layer comes off within the charmed circle, and discloses, on the face of the rock beneath, some characters which are warning or prophetic, and serve either as a guide for the conduct, or as an indication of the future, of the family seated on the imperial throne.

Within the circle it was plain enough to see that several layers had gradually flaked away; and as several dynasties had also succeeded one another, the coincidence was quite enough to connect the two in the superstitious minds of the people. There were also markings on the face of the rock, and although these might bear some fanciful resemblance to some of the characters in the Chinese written language, yet no one pretended to be able to decipher them. This, however, mattered little, and as they had been told the story, so they received it, and handed it down in implicit faith to their successors.

In this gorge, in the precipices, and on the sides of the hills, there are many caves; and where it has been found possible to cut a path in the face of the rock some of them are inhabited.

During the day we passed the boundary of Hou-Pei, and entered Ssŭ-Ch'uan, or the province of the four streams, a province that has been noted by all travellers as one of the most beautiful, perhaps the richest, and for foreigners certainly the most pleasant in the empire. In the evening we anchored at the little village of Ch'ing-She-K'ou (Coloured Snake Mouth).

March 18.—The next morning we started for a

picnic up the narrow glen, which from its twists and turns has given the name to the village.

The peaches and apricots were now in *full* bloom; there were little patches of opium, the first I had seen, where the poppies were now about a foot high, and here and there tiny plots of wheat were growing on slopes so steep that it seemed as if it would be impossible to reap without assistance from a rope.

As we ascended, the valley became more narrow and precipitous; the path was very rugged and difficult, sometimes only just wide enough to walk on, and cut out of the side of the hill, which was everywhere exceedingly steep. The tops of the mountains were broken into crags and pinnacles of the most fantastic shape. In the gullies and cracks in the cliffs, a wild and luxuriant vegetation of brambles, ferns, long grass, and all sorts of shrubs was clinging to the sides, wherever these were not absolutely vertical. Wild yellow jasmine was in bloom, maiden hair, and other ferns grew in profusion, and pink primulæ peeped out from crevices in the rocks. The inhabitants, who are very poor, live in caves; indeed, there is absolutely no level space on which a house could be built. In our day's walk we only passed two or three of these family residences, and a population can scarcely be said to exist. The narrow foot-path runs in front of the caves, beyond which there may be a sheer drop of some hundreds of feet, and to prevent the children or pigs from tumbling over, a light paling is sometimes put up on the outer side of the path. Passing one of these caves the sudden and unexpected appearance of a foreign dog frightened an ancient fowl, that fluttered over the fence, flapping its wings and cackling, till its voice was gradually lost in the depths and drowned by the murmur of the invisible stream below.

The scene was very wild ; here the gorge divided into two branches, each enclosed between gigantic cliffs ; on the top of these a little slip of sloping ground would be seized on for agriculture, and this again would be backed up by another cliff behind ; zigzag paths, or steps cut in the rock, leading from one patch to another.

We had a most difficult scramble over sharp stones, and after two hours and a half arrived at a cave where an old woman was at home, and where we decided to breakfast. This old woman kept bees in hives of primitive construction, and told us that she sold both honey and bees-wax, but that the bees had not yet swarmed ; she also said that wherever opium is grown in any quantity it drives the bees away, but that here the quantity was too small to have any injurious effect.

There were some furnaces not far off where saltpetre was purified, but the process was not going on just at the time of our visit, and we were unable to learn the details of the manufacture. After our breakfast we continued our walk, but soon found that the hill sides became too steep for a path of any description, and that the track we were on descended to the torrent and crossed over to the other side, so we retraced our steps and returned to our boat.

March 19.—During the morning we remained at anchor, as there was no tracking-path, and without it we could not make way against the current and strong wind that was blowing. It cleared off towards the middle of the day, but our progress was very slow, for it was again necessary to lay out ropes and haul ourselves tediously up. Here and there it was just possible to track for a couple of hundred yards, but even then the coolies were obliged to clamber about on their

hands and feet from one gigantic rock to another, and in the evening, when we arrived at the little village of Tiao-Shih, our run was only seven miles.

The limestone rocks here have been worn in the most astounding manner. In many places there are in the face of the rock innumerable long vertical grooves; the surface of these is highly polished by the action of the wind and weather, and they look exactly as if they had been scooped out with a gigantic cheese-scoop. In other places the rocks are split up vertically into long needles and stalagmite-shaped masses.

March 20.—The Wu-Shan gorge that we had entered on the morning of the 16th seemed interminable, for we were still in it, with no immediate prospect of getting out. At eight o'clock we were opposite the town of Wu-Shan, where there was rather a severe rapid. While we were in it, the tracking line broke, and as we had no safety ropes we were swept away. The men steering, however, skilfully managed to shoot us into a back eddy, which carried us several yards up the stream inside the rapid; but before we could be made fast, we were again taken into the downward stream. Like a teetotum we spun round, and once more driven down the river we were a second time shot into the back eddy. Still we had no rope ashore, and back again we went, spinning about each time in a way that would have made some people sea-sick. Whilst we were thus being carried up and down, a man was trying to swim to the land with a line. When at last he gained the bank, the rope caught in a rock at the bottom, and as no efforts would avail to clear it, a second coolie fastened another rope to his body, and jumping overboard swam away. But while struggling with the foaming torrent, the

loop slipped over his body unperceived, and when he arrived on shore he was astonished to find that he had lost the end.

All this time we were at the mercy of the eddies, being whirled round and round, and carried up and down. We made no less than six voyages backwards and forwards, and it seemed likely that we should make as many more, when by a stroke of good luck, the first line cleared itself from the rock, and we hauled ourselves at length out of the rapid.

The day's journey was a succession of rapids, some of them long ones. It is by no means a simple or easy matter to get a big boat up one of these. After the line is out, and the necessary number of coolies are hauling on it, the boat is shot across the river into mid-stream, until often the line is almost at right angles to the direction of the keel. The vessel is then put about, and she makes a shoot inshore, and so on, tacking as it were backwards and forwards.

We anchored for the night close to a junk that had been wrecked, and was now ashore for repair; the sailors and coolies were all living under mats, and the caulkers were busy with cotton wool on the bottom of the vessel.

I took a turn for half an hour before dinner, and noticed a little rice growing. There was some barley also, and a good deal of wheat. The rocks here are ground down by the wind and weather, and all the shore is edged with long banks of fine clean sand; and on this apparently fruitless soil, the Chinese manage to raise crops of wheat.

March 21.—We arrived at Kuei-Chou-Fu, the second place of that name we had passed on the river, and here Sun and our gunboat left us, and we were handed over to the charge of others.

Here also the Chinese agent of the firm of Major and Smith, of Hankow, called on us. As he entered he knocked his head against the ground to Baber, who lifted him up and asked him to sit down, but just as he was recovering from this act of condescension I came in and frightened him afresh. He again went down on his knees, and touched the ground with his forehead, and it was not without a great deal of persuasion that Baber at length prevailed on him to take a chair. The sensation of being seated seemed to be like touching the knob of an electric bell, for he suddenly launched himself into an ocean of words from which it was quite impossible to withdraw him; he talked so fast that he could not articulate quickly enough. He persistently addressed himself to me, making the most pathetic gestures every time that Baber told him I did not understand Chinese. On these occasions he would only give one glance at Baber, and again devote the whole of his energy in talking to me.

After a long time this monstrous narrative of some private business trouble began to pall upon us both, and at length Baber hinted that his conversation was not quite so entertaining as it might have been. This seemed to act like additional battery power to the electric bell, for seating himself more firmly in his chair, 'he argued high, he argued low, and then he argued round about him.' Baber now called for another tin of the fragrant weed, and we both smoked steadily, the pile of cigarette ends growing higher and higher in the cover of the tobacco box as the worthy man still rolled out the stream of his volubility.

One by one the servants came to the door and listened in wonder, the old woman was seen in front to take a peep through a crack in the walls, and then

to steal away awestruck at the torrent of speech. As the evening grew darker the smell of dinner was wafted from the kitchen, but still that fearful man sat glued to his chair.

Baber now made a polite attempt to stop him with fair words, but he might as well have tried to stop an avalanche with a sheep hurdle, and at last, like the bishop in the ballad, 'Oh, bosh! the worthy Baber said, And turned him out.'

Our parting official, Sun, brought his successor to pay his respects to Baber. He was a funny little man; he thought that the fact of his having lost five dollars betting at Hankow races, ought to make a very strong and favourable impression on us, and boasted of having made a trip to Shanghai for pleasure. He took a cigarette with a card mouthpiece, but tried to light it at the wrong end, which gave Sun an opportunity of displaying his superior knowledge of Western ideas.

Kuei-Chou-Fu is surrounded by a very good wall, in much better condition than that of most towns. The town is well situated on the slope of a high hill, and there are a good many suburbs, some permanent, and built on the high ground. But a very large population live in temporary huts of matting set up on the shingly beach. These are removed in the summer as the river rises and covers all the ground on which they are built. Kuei-Chou-Fu is the seat of considerable trade, and at the time of our visit there were a great number of junks at anchor off the town.

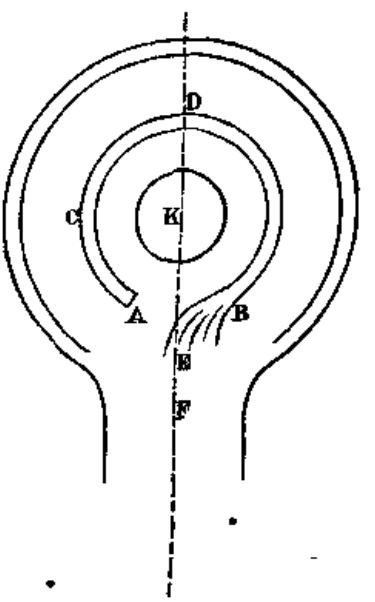
We found provisions here more plentiful than at any place we had visited since leaving I-Ch'ang, and were able to buy excellent vegetables and very indifferent beef and mutton.

March 22.—A very large revenue is derived from the salt manufacture which is carried on at brine pits situated about half a mile below Kuei-Fu, on both sides of the river, where on low, sandy, shingly banks, close to the water's edge, holes are dug. The water finds its way into these through the soil, becoming in its passage impregnated with salt, but not strongly, for the taste of salt in it is scarcely perceptible.

Bricks are made from the salt earth in the neighbourhood, with which dome-shaped ovens are built.

These have a door in front, and there is a hole in the top in which a shallow iron pan, K, is placed.

FIG. 4.



On the top of the oven, and concentric with the iron pan, a hollow in the brickwork makes a narrow trough A C D B. Above the back of the oven at E F the wall is covered with, and made up of cinders, slag, and earth.

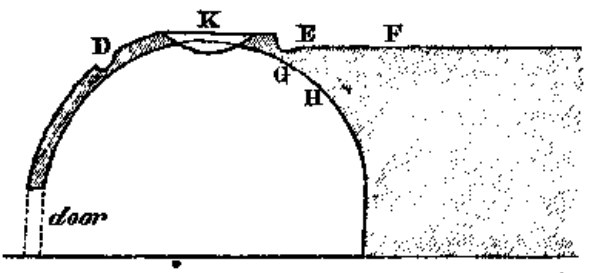
The brine is first poured into the narrow trough at A, and running slowly round the top of the oven,

discharges itself at E amongst the cinders, slag, and earth at the back. It permeates easily through these into the back wall of the oven itself, G H, fig. 5, and amongst the bricks of which it is built. Here the heat drives off the water, and leaves the salt deposited on and in the bricks.

After ten days or so the fire is let out, the back of the oven pulled down, the bricks from it carefully removed, and the oven built with fresh bricks.

The stuff that has now been taken out is broken with hammers and stones, and put into a large wooden bucket; more brine is thrown into this mass, which

FIG. 5.



seems to be disintegrated by it, and now breaks up, forming with the water and the brine a black substance of about the consistency of freshly-made mortar. The water is poured from the bucket into the iron pan at the top of the oven, where it is evaporated, and very good salt produced.

We found the people at these pits extremely civil, very few troubled themselves about us, and our numerous and minute questions were patiently and politely answered. It is said that there are forty pits here, and that each pit produces one hundred catties (130 lbs.) of salt a day; this would make 890 tons of salt per annum.

The Government buys all the salt at a rate fixed

by itself, and then sends it over the country for sale, making an enormous profit. I subsequently learnt from a banker at Ch'ung-Ch'ing that the salt in the province of Ssŭ-Ch'uan brought to the Government a revenue of six millions of taels annually—roughly two millions sterling. The profit comes to about eighteen cash a pound, and at the rate of 1,600 cash to a tael, this would make the annual produce of salt in this province 237,946 tons, an amount that seems almost incredible.

In the afternoon we went to see an aqueduct by which water is brought into the town from the top of a hill behind, and which was reported to be something very curious. A narrow paved path, in many places made into regular flights of steps, leads up a steep hill, which is an enormous graveyard, the whole side of it, for a distance of more than a mile from the town, being closely covered with graves; some of these stand in the centre of a carefully levelled patch of ground, and are exceedingly solid and imposing structures of stone with doors closed by slabs on which long inscriptions are engraved; whilst others are the usual mounds of earth without a stone or writing of any kind.

The aqueduct we were following was simply a small stone gutter carefully laid along the side of the hill; a stream of clear water was running down in it. After a walk of about three quarters of an hour we reached a temple that had been indicated to us on the spot whence the water came. All the people said that 'Lily Pool,' the source of the rivulet, was here.

This temple was dedicated to a lily; but the pool was nothing more than a circular hollow thirty yards across, which, although it was no doubt full after heavy rain, was now as dry as Sahara.

We said to the guide, 'but where does the stream

come from?' for we were standing within a foot of the stone channel in which the water was running, and which had no connection with Lily Pool.

'From here,' he said, pointing to the dry hollow.

This answer was characteristic of the credulity of the average Chinaman. He had had enough walking, and simply said whatever first came into his head that he thought would prevent us going any further. He knew that if he were in a strange place he would accept, without for a moment questioning it, the statement of anyone belonging to the place; and it was almost impossible for him to conceive that we should not do likewise. For did he not live here? and was it not therefore obvious that he must know better than we, who were strangers from far away.

Of course, amongst a people where evidence is never weighed, and the wildest statements received without examination, it is only natural to find that lying is a common vice. Honesty in this case cannot be and is not the best policy; the people tell lies because lying pays; but when they shall be sufficiently far advanced in education to weigh evidence, then lying will begin to lose its value, and we may expect to find truthfulness amongst the people.

We who were accustomed to use the evidence of our senses, now followed the aqueduct for another quarter of an hour to a place where a jet of water spouted from a hole in the rock about 1,500 feet above the river. This aqueduct is nearly three miles long, and was built during the Ming dynasty (1600 A.D.), by some Fu of this town, ambitious of having a water supply all to himself. The rest of the inhabitants still have to content themselves with the river water, which fortunately for them is quite as good as the private tap of this arrogant magistrate.

At the outskirts of the town plenty of people came to see us, but no one said a rude word. The epithet 'foreign devil,' is never heard, because the people of Ssŭ-Ch'uan are very superstitious; they will not pronounce the word devil, for it is said to be unlucky; sailors do not like to make use of the word '*wind*,' for fear it should cause an adverse gale; nor will they talk about snakes, lest they should be bitten.

In the evening Sun sent us an invitation to a concert on board his boat, where after tea a little girl about eleven years old was introduced by her mother. She wore a scarlet coat trimmed with black; a blue embroidered cap, big ear-rings, and a large silver ring on one forefinger. She had a wooden guitar, on which she played an accompaniment, and a fan on which were written the names of the songs she knew; these were tolerably numerous, considering that she had learnt music only eighteen months. She was very self-possessed, and sang without affectation, but through her nose, and in a very high key. There was a distinct air running through her songs, although it was rather hard to follow, but there was not much melody in the whining droning kind of music that characterised the performance. Sun gave her a string of cash and a cup of tea, and then her mother took her away.

March 23.—It rained heavily during the night, and when we looked out we found that there was a fresh layer of snow on the mountain-tops, and that the water of the river had again turned to a muddy colour. Four coolies ran away in the morning, and we were delayed while the headman went to seek them. If it was the tongue of our old Jezebel that had frightened them, it was no matter for wonder. They were brought back repentant in the course of the after-

noon, and we started again. We had now left the gorges, and the gentle slopes and open valleys were a pleasant change after having been so long shut up in the deep recesses where we could seldom see more than a narrow strip of sky.

March 24.—After an afternoon walk on shore, as the junk was out of the way, I took a voyage in our gunboat, and we came to a small rapid where a ledge of rocks made it difficult to track. The trackers let the line go, and the men remaining in the boat tried to row up; but they were too few, and unlike the crews of most of these boats, though exceedingly energetic, they were remarkably unskilful, and had no idea of keeping time. The captain especially wielded his paddle with a vigour quite alarming in a sedate Chinese official, and made more splashing, and was more hopelessly out of time than any of his men. We then crossed the river, and a backwater carried us up a short distance; after which we recrossed to find the trackers, who had taken advantage of the opportunity to hide themselves amongst the rocks to smoke or go to sleep. Much shouting and swearing ensued, particularly on the part of the well-meaning commander. We eventually arrived at our destination half an hour before our junk. When she was moored alongside the captain was most particular in the arrangement of the gangway, and when all was ready tried it himself before allowing me to put my feet on it; but the dignity of the performance was altogether spoilt by my dog Tib, who smelling dinner rushed past the captain, and nearly upset him into the river.

March 25.—Near the village of Miao-Chi there is rather a difficult rapid with broken water right across the river. A stream that comes down from

the mountain used to bring great boulders with it, and make the place very dangerous, so the government, aided by local subscriptions, built a solid wall 200 feet long, 45 feet wide, and in some places 12 feet high. This abutted at one end on to a reef of rocks, the prolongation of the upper bank of the stream, and turned the water so that it entered the river below the rapid. This was built only fifteen years ago, and was a creditable work of very large blocks of limestone, 12 or 14 feet long, and 1 to 2 feet wide and thick. The long stones were dovetailed into one another; but the mortar and cement, always a weak point in Chinese buildings, were bad. The edifice was adorned with what was no doubt a suitable extract from some of the classics, but the meaning of which was obscure. Though built so recently it was already falling to pieces, and no one seemed to care about repairing it. Many of the stones were loose and detached, and some had been swept away altogether. When we arrived here we found the whole male population of the place engaged in taking a shoal of small fish that had come up, and had been entangled amongst the rocks. There were upwards of twenty men in the river, few of these wearing anything but a turban, and a basket tied round their waists. They had only to put their hands into the water, and the fish were so thick that they took them out two, three, and sometimes half a dozen at a time. Those who were unprovided with baskets put their catch into their waistbands, if they had any, or into their mouths, if they had none; and when these receptacles would hold no more they walked ashore, deposited them in a place of safety, and returned to the water. Some of them merely flung them to friends, who gathered them up; and all

of course were jabbering and shouting. The regular fishing apparatus of nets, and pots, like lobster pots, was left alone; and one old man, sitting in a corner of a rock with a scoop-net, seemed altogether out in the cold, as he caught nothing all the time we were looking on. By degrees the shoal visibly decreased, and when we left the number taken was very much less than at first.

We afterwards passed the city of Yün-Yang, enclosed by a fine wall, which does not seem to be very highly appreciated by the inhabitants, who nearly all live outside it, and leave the magistrate in his yamen almost alone in solitary grandeur.

March 26.—It rained heavily all day, but as there was a fresh and fair wind we made a good run. The country now changed considerably in appearance. The hills sloped more gently, and their sides were well wooded. Our view now was not so limited, and we could see little square enclosures, like towers, on the tops of the hills; these, they said, were erected in the time of the Tai-Ping rebellion, for the inhabitants to take refuge in; but as there could not by any possibility be any water supply, siege operations on an extended scale would hardly be necessary to bring a garrison to terms, and it would appear as if there must have been some other reason for their existence. It is very difficult in China to get any trustworthy information, scarcely any one knows anything; but no matter how ignorant, everyone has a complete answer ready for any question that may be put.

March 27.—Taking a walk by a narrow path paved with flagstones, which became a flight of steps wherever the sides of the hills were steep, and medi-

tating on the melancholy fact that this was the almost invariable case in China, I thought that it must be one of the causes to which the want of observation in a Chinaman is to be attributed. For, brought up from childhood in a country where the paths are so dangerous that he can only use his eyes to pick steps for his feet, he is never able to look about him and observe what is going on.

The richness and verdure of this part of the country is almost inconceivable; the soil is bright red, and, where fallow, presents a delightful contrast to the fresh green of the young crops. The rape was now in flower, and field upon field of brilliant yellow rose one above the other. The terrace cultivation of rice occupied the bottoms of all the valleys, with patches here and there of wheat or beans. The houses looked comfortable and substantial, each enclosed in a clump of bamboo; handsome temples stood by themselves in groves of trees. Every here and there a species of banyan (without pendants) standing by itself, with perhaps a little niche underneath for burning incense in, was a graceful ornament to the landscape.

All these combined to present a scene of richness and fertility that I have seldom seen equalled, and which fully justified the praise that has been lavished by travellers on this beautiful province. And more striking than all is the fine open countenance of the people, who, though very independent, are undoubtedly the most pleasant and gentle of all the people of China. Baber and I went out for a stroll in the afternoon, and ascending a hill about 1,500 feet above the river we had a fine view of Wan and its surroundings. The rugged and wild mountains now were only in the distance, and around us the hills

were of less height; all these were broken away at the top, giving their summits the appearance of solid towers with perpendicular walls. Descending by another road we found a great ledge of rock at the edge of the water. Here the industrious people, anxious not to lose an inch of ground, had made a bed of sand wherever there was the smallest hollow, and here little patches of wheat, sometimes only a couple of yards long by one broad, were absolutely growing out of the sand that had been strewn on the rock.

March 28.—The cultivation of rape in this neighbourhood is very extensive, and vast quantities of oil are prepared here from it; for the people have no butter, so that all grease required for cooking must be oil; neither have they any sheep, and therefore, in the absence of tallow, oil only can be used for lighting purposes. In this manner a large proportion is consumed in the province; but there is also a considerable export trade. On the right bank of the river, terrace cultivation of rice was maintained on every inch of ground, as the general shape of the gently sloping hills forms natural amphitheatres, where the water is easily led; but even where this is not the case this industrious people seem determined to grow rice, if there is any possibility of doing so. In the course of a ramble I came upon a hillock at the end of a spur, considerably higher than any ground immediately around it. To make use of this a stone aqueduct, raised seven or eight feet above the ground, and about 150 yards long, had been made, but the portion of land thus secured for use was so small that it seemed as if it would have been easier to level the hillock than to make this aqueduct.

Notwithstanding the industry of the Chinese, and

their admirable system of irrigation and terrace cultivation, there can be very little doubt that the exceedingly high estimate in which their agriculture is held is very far from being deserved. This appears to have been derived from the French missionaries, for as early as 1804, Barrow speaks of the way in which it had been overrated; nearly all moderns who have been in China make the same observation, and yet there remains amongst Europeans out of China the conviction that the Chinese possess secrets unknown to, or unguessed at by Europeans.

But the real point in which the Chinese excel is in industry. It is industry that leads them to take such care never to waste the smallest trifle; and it is industry that makes it worth their while to gather up the last fragments. Industry again enables them to dispense with any other manure than the sewage of the towns; for a peasant will walk into the town, fetch his manure, and take it to his field himself. It is by industry that in the large plains the Chinese are enabled to keep their rice fields properly watered; for it is not possible to conduct the water by canals to every part and every level of a wide plain, it must therefore be lifted artificially, and all day long coolies are to be seen in the extensive plains raising water by the means of little treadmills.

But beyond their industry the Chinese can hardly lay claim to any superiority over other nations. They plough about as well as the natives of India, doing little more than scratch the ground. It is true that they can raise two crops on the same field, as, for instance, when they plant opium under rape, or yams beneath millet. But this is a system not altogether unknown to European farmers, and in the West Indies it is customary to grow yams underneath the sugar

canes. Some of Barrow's remarks appear to be worth quoting:

'They have no knowledge of the modes of improvement practised in the various breeds of cattle; no instruments for breaking up and preparing waste lands; no system for draining and reclaiming swamps and morasses.

. . . . . .

levelling the sides of mountains into a succession of terraces, [is] a mode of cultivation frequently taken notice of by the missionaries as unexampled in Europe, and peculiar to the Chinese, whereas it is common in many parts of Europe. . . . Of the modes practised in Europe of improving the quality of fruit they seem to have no just notion . . . . Apples, pears, plums, peaches, and apricots, are of indifferent quality. . . . They have no method of forcing vegetables by artificial heat, or by excluding the cold air and admitting at the same time the rays of the sun through glass. Their chief merit consists in preparing the soil, working it incessantly, and keeping it free from weeds.'

Thus wrote Barrow three quarters of a century ago; the Chinese are no further advanced than they were in his time; and it is hardly necessary to add anything to his remarks, except to observe that not only have the Chinese 'no just notion' of improving the quality of fruit, but that to this day they remain in complete ignorance of the science of grafting. To those accustomed to the appearance of European countries, the absence of hedges is at first sight strange, but in this country, as in many others, people recognise their own property by the divisions in the fields; and even where there are no marks, one man will rarely attempt to plough beyond his own land; boundary stones to properties are, however, usual. It

is not to be supposed that disputes never arise, but when they do they are generally, or almost always, settled by the people of the place.

Some of the farmhouses here are very large and substantial; and plenty of opportunity is given for forming an opinion of them, owing to an eccentric custom of leading the high road through some part of the buildings, where half a dozen snarling dogs rush out yelping and yapping. The reason probably is that level ground is so scarce, that every yard must be utilised; and the ordinary avocation of threshing, or the women's occupations of grinding corn or sewing, can be carried on just as well on the footpath as elsewhere; and the number of passers-by is so small that they do not in the least interfere with the inmates. In one of my walks I passed a particularly fine farmhouse, and although in this case the road did not lead through it, I was able to examine it carefully. There was a large outer courtyard with sheds on each side. It was enclosed by a good wall on the side to the road; opposite there was a very large threshing floor and granary, well built and covered in; beyond this the house was arranged round three sides of another smaller open court. Three or four men were busy grinding flour at a large hand-mill; and I could not but be surprised that they did not make use of a good stream that was running past their house.

The Yang-Tzŭ would be admirably adapted for the stationary mill boats that are so prominent on the Danube, but in this rice country it is probable that the amount of grain to be ground is so small that it is hardly worth while to build water-mills. In the mountainous districts, where oats and Indian corn form the food of the people, water-mills are common enough.

The Chinese are never remiss in the care they take of the dead; and where the residences of the living are so good, it is to be expected that the graves will not be less sumptuous; and this is the case, some of them being magnificent structures built of large blocks of stone in an enclosure sometimes fifteen yards square, in which a few shrubs will be growing; the front is ornamented with carvings in relief representing birds, beasts, or men variously occupied. There are always long inscriptions, and the whole is generally sheltered by a fine banyan tree, or a few yews.

Whilst I was ashore, the junk ran aground, and knocked a big hole in her side; but Jezebel, looking at it with unconcern, remarked, between the whiffs of her pipe, 'cotton wool,' by which unusually laconic observation she meant that the hole was to be stuffed up with that material.

March 29.—We walked in the afternoon to Shih-Pao-Chai (Stone Jewel Fort), where there is a very curious rock, the top of which is about 150 feet above the ground on which it stands, and 300 feet above the river. All the faces of it are perpendicular, and on one side a pagoda has been built against the rock. We visited this, and went to the top, where we found a number of wooden figures carved and brilliantly painted and gilded. These figures represented the horrors of hell, and the punishments reserved for the wicked; the judges were life-size figures of men, with long black beards and mustachios, holding books in their hands. The executioners were horrible devils, with hideous faces, who were supposed to be thoroughly enjoying their odious task of torturing the victims. These tortures were of many kinds, and the most abominable that it is possible to imagine:

some of the sinners were being sawn in two; some were being ground in a mill; and others were arranged in layers between big flat stones, with their heads only projecting all round, while a demon stood above spearing their faces. There was no representation of Heaven. The eighteen saints with twenty-four attendants were in another room; and at the entrance, the god of literature, a repulsive creature, was standing on the point of one toe like a ballet-dancer.

We met our official here, who took us to a room in the top story, and showed us a hole that had been the site of a miraculous draught of rice. He told us that in former days if a priest put a handful of rice into this hole, all the inmates of the Temple were able to sit down and take out as much rice as they could eat, no matter how many of the holy men partook of it. History does not relate whether it was ready-cooked. But in the time of Chia-Ching (the emperor who reigned from 1796 to 1821) a wicked and avaricious priest sold this heaven-sent food, on which the offended deities stopped the supplies, and all that now remains is the empty hole.

The only remark to be made on the story is that the deities must have been strangely ignorant of the Chinese character not to have foreseen the result.

A little higher up the river there is a place where for many years no efforts of the industrious Chinaman had availed to produce rice; but on the cessation of the miracle in the pagoda, the gods compensated the country by fructifying this unfertile spot; and since that time rice has always been produced here in quantity and quality equal to that in any other district.

It would be hardly worth while to repeat these

tales, but that they serve to show the credulity and superstition of the people; the official who was with us, and who was a well-educated man, believed implicitly in the story, and as the suggestion of a doubt would only have hurt his feelings, we listened to the narrative with becoming gravity.

March 30.—We went for a walk in the afternoon on the left bank of the river. The country was very hilly, and the valleys formed exceedingly picturesque amphitheatres, where the vegetation was almost tropical in its luxuriousness; the thick clumps of bamboo, and the rich green of the shrubs and trees, brought to mind the verdure of Ceylon or Singapore. We gained the top of a hill about 600 feet high; a beautiful panorama lay before us; and from our commanding position we could see our boats moored for the night at the other side of the river. When we had again reached the shore we saw a small boat not far off, and called out to the man in it to come and take us across; but the only occupant was asleep, and he was not aroused without much shouting. At length he awoke, and a long discussion ensued between him and our escort; the noise brought out some people from a village 200 feet straight over our heads, who joined in the argument, and a horrid old woman was heard to shout, 'Don't come, for when you get to the other side they won't pay you.' So, notwithstanding the offer of large reward, after about a quarter of an hour's talking, the man in the boat quietly paddled off and cut short the argument.

All this time the soldier who was with us from the gunboat was trying to make himself heard by his comrades on the other side, but meeting with little success, all began shouting together to try and attract attention, and the hills re-echoed the unwonted British

hail of 'Boat ahoy!' It now became dark, and it was not until we had been amusing ourselves in this way for about three quarters of an hour, that at length some of our people were aroused to our situation, and we heard from the other side of the river a responsive cry. But in order that the men coming to us might find us in the dark we continued shouting to guide them to our position. They discovered us at length, and after having waited on the shore for upwards of an hour, we embarked in a sampan and crossed safely to our dinner. But now that the people had been thoroughly roused, they became afraid that something dreadful would happen to us or them, especially the captain of the gunboat, who hearing us continue to shout after the first sampan had left, bustled across in a terrible hurry with his vessel and all his crew. No sooner had he started, than an envoy who had been sent by the Fu of the next town (Chung) to pay his respects to Baber, grew alarmed also, and collecting twenty men, nearly all the population of the immediate neighbourhood, went over to assist in the search, and it was a long time before the town returned to its normal quiet state.

March 31.—Opposite Wu-Yang a considerable bend of the river commences. The neck is about five miles across, and as the distance by water is about nine we determined to walk over while our junk went round the bend. We landed about half a mile above Wu-Shan, and striking up a valley we made for a high hill in a south-west direction. A very fair paved path led at first gently up amongst small woods of fir trees. Beyond these comfortable farmhouses were enclosed in their clumps of bamboo, and all the valley was carefully laid out in terraces for rice cultivation, with here and there a small patch of opium, a few cabbages,

or a field of wheat. We gradually ascended, until we found ourselves on a ridge 800 feet above the river. After enjoying the prospect for a few minutes we went down to a stream running over a rocky bed, where mosses and ferns were growing luxuriantly. A short ascent beyond brought us to a peasant's house, where we sat down outside, and talked with the proprietor about his affairs. He drew water for us, and gave us lights for our cigars, and although evidently exceedingly poor, for his cottage was very small, he at first refused the proffered string of cash.

There were two baskets here with their contents drying in the sun; these were the flowers picked off a tree in appearance very like an apricot; the blossom is a kind of long conical-shaped pod, on the surface of which there are a number of very small flowers full of yellow pollen. These flowers when dried are boiled, and the very poor people drink the broth instead of tea. The local name of the tree is Ch'ung-Shu.[8]

After this we continued our walk till we reached a point above the river from which we could see our convoy coming up, so we hurried down, and a sampan soon put us on board.

April 1.—In navigating this portion of the river, it is continually necessary to cross and recross from one bank to the other, partly to save distance by cutting off the angles of the numerous sharp bends, partly to get into the back eddies, and avoid the current, and partly because it is often impossible to track on one side, while there is a fair path on the other. It is this that constitutes one of the chief difficulties of the navigation, and leads to most of the accidents.

[8] An endeavour has been made, by consulting very high botanical authorities, to identify the flower here spoken of, but it has not been found possible to do so (Y).

The junks are always rowed across towards some place where a landing is practicable ; as a rule there is scarcely any room to spare, and unless the exact point is gained, the swirls and eddies that often run violently amongst the reefs will drive the vessel against a rock. Amongst these tides it requires the greatest skill and nicety to shoot the junk exactly to the desired spot, and it is under these circumstances that vessels are often wrecked or damaged. During the day we met with two accidents in this way ; on the second occasion a big hole was knocked in our ship, which as usual was repaired with cotton-wool and paper.

April 2.—Although in our walks we had frequently noticed little patches of opium, we had not seen it hitherto in any considerable quantity ; but in this neighbourhood we saw it growing in large fields.

April 3.—The river was so low that when we arrived at the north end of St. George's Island we found that not only was there no passage inside it, but that a reef, rarely visible, was now plainly to be seen beyond. Our small boat, and that of our official, made no attempt to pass inside this reef ; but our people, seized apparently with a fit of temporary insanity, thought that though our junk was much bigger, and drew more water than the others, they would try the inner passage. So, as we were sitting in our room discussing the probability of our arrival that night at the city of Fu-Chou, there was a sudden bump that nearly shook us out of our chairs, followed by a babel of tongues, in which as usual the shrill and jarring voice of the old woman was painfully audible. Rushing to the window we found the tracking line adrift, and the vessel spinning round like a top ; then the scrunching and grating sound of the junk dragging

herself over some sharp rocks was immediately followed by the sudden irruption of three or four coolies into our room, who, without any preliminary remarks, moved the furniture, lifted the floor boards, jumped into the hole, and taking all our boxes out, hastily passed them up to other coolies outside.

Looking down we now saw a large stream of water running in through a hole in the side of the boat, and we comprehended what had occurred. We had not, however, much time to alarm ourselves, for we were fortunately able to run on to a bank of mud before the vessel filled and sank, which she inevitably would have done in a very few minutes.

After having cleared the hold, the men set to work baling with buckets, and gradually succeeded in reducing the water, after which they repaired damages.

They first put on a kind of cataplasm of whitey-brown paper, mud and grains of rice,[9] over which they nailed a piece of wood, and stuffed the interstices with cotton-wool and bamboo shavings. As, of course, when the hole was made the planks were driven inwards, this patch was put on inside. The operation was a long one, and, extraordinary as the method may appear, it eventually proved tolerably effectual, although from the amount of baling that was always subsequently necessary, Baber suggested that our vessel should be called the Old Bâilee.

We spent the afternoon walking round the island, and found some of the gold-washers, who above this are always seen in the sand and shingle beds washing for particles of gold. The quantity these men obtain is so small that it can repay none but a frugal China-

[9] The Chinese use a great deal of rice in this way. I have seen a kind of concrete for building purposes made of mud and rice grains.

man for the labour. Here the river is known as the Chin-Sha-Chiang, or River of Golden Sand, and this name is applied to it at least as high up as Bat'ang.

April 4.—Near the city of Fu-Chou, the principal river of the province of Kwei-Chou enters the Yang-Tzŭ. We landed for a walk on the left bank about four miles below this, and found ourselves in a little valley with a very pretty waterfall about thirty feet high, sparkling and leaping down amongst deliciously green verdure of moss, creepers, and ferns. We called it the Fountain of Egeria, and clambering up the hill on the west, reached what would be considered a good road in these parts, though it was little more than a long flight of steps of roughly squared stones about eighteen inches broad. After ascending 1,000 feet we gained a sort of fort, that had, so the inhabitants said, been built in the year 1804 as a refuge against robbers. The side towards the stream was guarded naturally by an inaccessible precipice, and a rough wall that was now falling into ruins had been built round the other three. Leaving this we struck off westerly, but the lay of the hills and valleys, and the direction of the paths, drove us up to the north away from the river. At last, from the top of a hill we saw a fine broad valley below us, with a paved road running along the bottom, where there were a great many people and coolies going in both directions. We knew that this would lead us to the water, so descending we followed it, and gained the banks between Fu-Chou and Li-Tu, opposite a joss-house marked in Blakiston's chart. With the aid of a telescope we could now just see the 'Old Bailee' disappearing round a point two miles higher up. We followed as fast as we could, by a path that wound

about along the bank, now a couple of hundred feet up, now again close to the edge of the water, then with a sharp turn it would ascend a steep ravine for nearly a quarter of a mile, before crossing the little torrent at the bottom and returning to the river side.

A stern chase is proverbially a long chase, and we found it so in this instance. We walked as fast as we could, but each time the road gave us a chance of using our telescope, the ship, if visible at all, was further away from us than ever, and just as it was getting dark the wretched track came to an end, and left us face to face with a high cliff. Fortune, however, favoured us, for at this moment a small boat passed; we hailed it, and prevailed upon the owner, by the promise of 200 cash, to take us up to our ship. She was much further away than we expected, but after we had rowed about an hour and a half we reached Li-Tu, and finding himself at home, the pious Wang-Erh, who used to accompany us in our walks, and who was always very glad to get back, was heard to exclaim, 'Oh! Mane, Buddha, I knock my head,' meaning thereby that he morally knocked his head on the ground in token of thankfulness, and when we sat down at half-past eight to our dinner we also knocked our heads.

The old woman now came to us, and said that the repairs to the junk had been so costly that she could not pay the crew, who were mutinous and hungry. When she was reminded that she had already received more money than she was entitled to, she appealed to our official, who, seeing a chance of getting some silver through his fingers, suggested that we should give him five taels, that he would pay what was necessary to the crew, and would be responsible for the whole. But the artifice was apparent even to our simple

minds, so thanking him warmly for his disinterested offer we declined to give him so much trouble.

April 5.—Notwithstanding the complete consumption of the purse, all the people wanted to 'buy things,' as they invariably did at any town of importance, and we were late getting under way.

April 6.—We passed a remarkable temple cut out of rock on the left bank of the river, in which we could see two gigantic gods brilliantly painted and gilded; and in the evening we anchored at a small village about four miles below Chung-Chou.

April 7.—The crew appeared to be up all night; they were continually moving about, and were off by five. I heard the shouting and monotonous chaunt of the men in other junks even earlier, from which it was clear that everyone here hoped to reach Ch'ung-Ch'ing before dark. In many places it is impossible to track, and then the method of propulsion is by oars, or in some big junks by a very large scull, one on each side of the vessel. All the time that the coolies are at this work one of them chaunts a long story in time with the strokes, and at each stroke all the others join in a chorus of 'Hey-yea.' This will go on for ten minutes, when the story will end, and all will sing together, 'yoi hai ay-a.' The tone is continually varying, but the chaunting either of the story or the chorus never ceases. The method of employing the gigantic scull is quite unique. Every country uses it on a small scale, but I never heard of huge vessels being propelled in this way elsewhere. In any harbour in England dirty little boys may be seen sculling out of the stern of a boat. The Venetian gondolier also puts into practice much the same principle; but here huge junks, of some hundred tons burden, may be seen with an enormous scull on each

side, worked by as many as twelve or fifteen men. These sculls are supported at the fore part of the ship on a short outrigger, at the end of which there is a very short pin. This pin fits into a cup shaped hollow in the scull, and acting like a ball and socket joint just keeps the scull in its place. The men stand in a row, fore and aft, facing the water. At the end of the scull there is a strong leathern thong, which, fastened down to the side of the junk, keeps the end of the scull moving in a circle. This method, which is in fact an application of the principle of the screw, is no doubt the most economical way of applying the strength of the coolies; it is more frequently seen in use on junks coming down than on those going up the river, for in ascending there are such frequent changes to be made—sometimes tacking, sometimes laying out ropes, and only occasionally rowing—that these large sculls are not so convenient as oars; but in descending, when the middle of the stream is always kept, when rowing or sculling is the only method in use for driving the vessel, and when the whole crew is always on board, then the large scull is found the most suitable method of working the ship.

Notwithstanding the efforts of our crew, who worked really hard, we were unable to reach Ch'ung-Ch'ing this day, and anchored four miles below it, after a run of twenty miles.

One of our coolies, in stepping from one boat to another, fell down and broke his arm; poor fellow, he scarcely said a word, and if he felt much pain he bore it most quietly. A Chinese doctor was found to set it, although anatomy is a science the rudiments of which are as yet quite unknown to the Chinese, who are forbidden by their laws to dissect the carcases of any animal whatever.

CHAPTER VII.

CH'UNG-CH'ING TO CH'ÊNG-TU-FU.

Arrival at Ch'ung-Ch'ing—M. Provôt, Monsgr. Desflêches, and the French Missionaries; Their Cordiality—Official Visits—The Last of our Lady-Skipper—We are satirised in verse, and enabled to see ourselves as others see us—Mê, the Christian—Persecution of Christians—News of Tibet—Unfavourable Change of Feeling in Tibet as to Admission of Europeans—The Consulate at Ch'ung-Ch'ing Proclaimed—Consular Relations to Missionaries—Cheapness of Ch'ung-Ch'ing—General 'Fields-within-Fields'—Difficulties of Mr. Baber's Photographer—Exchange Troubles—Preparations to Start for Ch'êng-Tu—Elaborate Coolie Contract—Chinese Commercial Probity—Baggage Arrangements—Adieu to Baber—Joss-Houses and Paper Offerings—Characteristics of the Rice-Culture—Wayside Tea-shop—Pleasing Country—Poppy-fields—Yung-Ch'uan-Hsien—Everything Roofed in—T'sai-P'ing-Chên—Grand Thunderstorm—Paved Roads—Inns of Ssŭ-Ch'uan—Chinese Parsimony—Good Manners of Ssŭ-Ch'uan Folk—Jung-Ch'ang-Hsien—Characteristics of a Restaurant—Coolies at their Meal—Cooper's Dragon Bridge—Realistic Art—Want of Ideality in Chinese Character—Lung-Ch'ang-Hsien—Charming Inn—Wang-Chia-Ch'ang—Niu-Fu-Tu—Hsien-Tang—The Brine Town of Tzŭ-Liu-Ching—The Christian Landlord—The Brine-wells and Fire-wells—Mode of Boring and of Drawing the Brine—Further Details and Outturn of Salt—Politeness of the People—River Ch'ung-Ch'iang—Tzŭ-Chou—Gratuitous Diversion for a Village School—A Chinese Regiment—The School System—Sanitary Paradox of China—Red Basin of Ssŭ-Ch'uan—Transfers of Property—Yang-Hsien—Safflower Crop—Thickly Peopled Plain—Still Ascending Valley of the Ch'ung-Ch'iang—Thrift in Excess—Arrival at Ch'êng-Tu-Fu—Public Examinations in Progress.

April 8.—Early in the morning we reached the outskirts of the great city of Ch'ung-Ch'ing; and passing through a crowd of junks of all sizes, we hauled up to a position under the walls, where we very soon received a welcome batch of letters and papers from

the agents of Messrs. Major and Smith. The Chinese merchants have an excellent postal system of their own: they arrange amongst themselves to send couriers or runners on foot at regular intervals, who travel very fast, and generally very securely. In this case the letters had been only fourteen days from Hankow, about six hundred miles by road. During the whole time I was in China I received every letter and newspaper sent me, except one letter, and that had been forwarded *viâ* Russia!

Soon afterwards Monsieur Provôt, one of the French missionaries, came to pay us a visit: a tall pleasant man, dressed in Chinese clothes, and with an artificial plait, for the missionaries in China invariably discard foreign clothes. He said that all sorts of conjectures had been rife about us amongst the Chinese. He asked Baber when he was going on to Yün-Nan; and turning to me said he hoped that I should like living here. When he saw that we did not exactly understand the remark, he explained that it was the general opinion that Baber had been appointed a consul in Yün-Nan, and that I was to be consul at Ch'ung-Ch'ing. We hastened to undeceive him; but even the missionaries could hardly believe in a gentleman travelling for his own amusement without any commission from the Government; the Chinese certainly did not.

In the afternoon we received intimation that Monseigneur Desflêches, the Bishop, was coming to pay us a visit. He was a small vivacious man, and a true Frenchman; he was most genial, and his expressions of delight and compliments to Baber knew no bounds. 'Ah, Monsieur Baber, it is you at last. How you are welcome!! Here is a grand thing that you have done; ah! it is indeed a victory. Yes! yes! a

victory indeed. See how at last we have this great river opened to foreigners, thanks to you and your Government.'

Nothing could have exceeded the sincere cordiality of his welcome.

Probably besides missionaries there were not more than twenty or thirty foreigners who had ever been here, and the arrival of a real consul, accredited by the English Government, was naturally a glad event to the missionaries. But for all that we could not but feel it a pleasure to be so warmly welcomed, and received with such true and hearty friendship. The Bishop talked for a long time; first he told us about his flock, his converts, and his trials, of which he made very light, dreadful though they had been; he praised the English and the English Government, and declared that our country was the only one in which there was any real religious liberty. He naturally expressed great pleasure that war had not broken out between China and England, 'for,' he said, 'if it had we should all have been massacred here.'

After the Bishop had left we received visits from several Chinese, some of them Christians, one of whom sent us a present of a jar of fermented liquor, made from a particular kind of rice; it tasted like beer, with a strong flavour of the better class of Chinese wine. The chief officials sent their cards to Baber, and promised a visit in a day or two.

April 9.—Baber went to pay official visits to the magistrates, and I subsequently joined him at the house of the French missionaries, where we were hospitably entertained with port wine and sponge-cakes. The missionaries were all very thin men, with drawn features and sunken eyes, and they certainly had not the appearance of getting much of this world's

goods. They told us there were about one thousand Christians in the city, all of whom they clothed and fed, at one time when persecutions were going on.

We returned to our boat, as we had come, in state, with four bearers to each chair. The main street of the city is a very steep flight of steps, and is easy enough for the occupant of a chair going up, but coming down is very different. The chair is inclined at an angle of about 45°; there is no support for the feet, and the rider expects every moment to be ignominiously precipitated on to the back of one of the chair-coolies. This main street is so narrow that in places there is absolutely not standing room for a man between a chair and the shop fronts; these are all poor and dirty; and the place, though in reality rich and thriving, is by no means prepossessing in appearance.

April 10.—In the morning the Tao-Tai called on Baber.

He was a well-educated man, and had written a learned book on ancient characters. He had included in them copies of the inscriptions that are on the stone drums in the gateway of the Confucian Temple[1] at Peking; before leaving he told us that he had issued a proclamation informing the people of Ch'ung-Ch'ing that we were decent peaceful folk. The Hsien also called, and the official who had accompanied us on our voyage.

April 11.—A very fat Christian, named Mê, came in to say that he had found a house that he thought would do for the consulate, so Baber went to look at it, and came back well satisfied.

April 13.—The old lady who commanded our vessel came in afterwards with her child, and kneeling

[1] *See* ante, pp. 127–128.

on the ground burst into a flood of tears, declaring that she was the most miserable and unfortunate woman in the world; that she was a lone widow with no one to take care of her; that every one conspired against her; that she was no match for the wicked people by whom she was surrounded; and although she felt she had gained a high distinction by being allowed to bring our honourable selves up here, still her misfortunes had been many, and she was out of pocket by the transaction; and in pathetic tones, she expressed her hopes that our noble and honourable excellencies would not allow her and her orphan child to die of starvation. As a histrionic performance it was certainly creditable, the old woman having extracted from us half as much again as any Chinaman would have paid her. With a tongue so fierce and foul that it inspired awe if not respect, I could imagine no one better able to look after number one.

We now said good-bye to our ship, in which we had lived nine weeks. Our goods were first of all moved, and after everything had gone we followed in chairs. The coolies carrying the chairs bustled along at a great pace up the steep and dirty steps; three soldiers were in front to clear the way; nevertheless a good number of little boys followed, trying to lift the blinds and peep in; but there was no hostile demonstration of any kind. Besides the officials, the people of this province are mostly either merchants or agriculturists, the literati—that generally highly-favoured class in China—being held in light esteem by the men of Ssŭ-Ch'uan; and to this is probably owing the fact that foreigners are always treated with great politeness, as wherever opposition to foreigners is carried to any great extent, it will generally be

found to be owing to the influence of the literati class. There were of course some literati here, and so good an opportunity of showing their talents was not to be lost. So they wrote a poem in very bad rhyme, which Baber translated and headed, 'As others see us:'

'AS OTHERS SEE US.'

1. The Sea folk, once a tributary band,
   In growing numbers tramp o'er all the land.
2. English and French, with titulary sounds
   As of a nation, are the merest hounds!
3. Nothing they wot of gods, in earth or sky;
   Nothing of famous dignities gone by!
4. One of their virgins, clasped in my embrace,
   Told me last year the secrets of their race.
5. But all their deeds of darkness are as nought
   Compared with vileness by their fathers wrought!
6. I know their features, Goblins of the West!
   I know the elf locks on their devil's crest!
7. Cunning artificers, no doubt, but far
   Beneath our potency in peace, or war!
8. But now our opportunity is near;
   Learning and valour are assembled here;
9. Let all to the cathedral doors repair,
   Grapple the dogs, and never think to spare!
10. I read ye right! shall savages presume
    To harry China and escape the doom?
11. No! Let us all with emulous might combine
    To crush the priests, and save the Imperial line.
12. First slay the bishop, tear away his hide,
    Hack out his bones, and let his fat be fried!
13. And for the rest who have confessed the faith,
    Drag them along, and roast them all to death!
14. For when these weeds are rooted from the plain,
    What magic art can give them life again?

The author begins by inquiring why foreigners

should come to China; and though he shows an unusual amount of knowledge by stating that the French and English are different people, yet he denies nationality to either one or the other, who, he adds, are all mere dogs, and ignorant of the true religion. In line 6 he refers to the features of foreigners, which all Chinamen consider worse than hideous. Foreigners are usually also credited with red hair, which, in their eyes, is an abomination; hence the reference to elf locks. The author exhibits unexpected discrimination in crediting foreigners with being cunning artificers; Chinese generally think, or pretend to think, that we are ignorant of everything. In line 8, reference is made to the approaching examinations, when thousands of literati and students for degrees would be assembled at Ch'ung-Ch'ing. The last line refers to the popular belief that foreigners can after death return to life; and, once more showing more knowledge than might have been expected, combats this belief.

Mê, the Christian who visited us, owned a house in Ta-Li-Fu, and when Margary was there he visited Mê. At that time Margary was well treated; but after his sad death, his murder, though it took place at some distance, seemed to excite even the people of Ta-Li-Fu; and holding this extraordinary belief about the ability of foreigners to come to life, it somehow entered their heads that Margary was hidden with Mê, and that he had the sum of four thousand taels with him. In this frantic state of mind they stormed the house of the unfortunate Mê, and finding neither foreigner nor money pulled it down in revenge.

Baber's house was supplied with the amount of furniture usual in Chinese dwellings. A few stiff

arm chairs and clumsy tables, and a couple of heavy bedsteads. The walls and ceilings were, of course, as dirty as can well be imagined.

The Chinese have no idea of convenience or inconvenience, and our chairs had hardly set us down when visitors came in. Amongst them a man named Hsuan, who came every day, and used to sit for two or three hours, talking incessantly the whole time; he had passed his examination, and hoped soon to be appointed a Hsien. Whenever he called he used to insist on my smoking one of his pipes; it would not have been exactly objectionable if there had been more of it, but, like eating water-melon seeds, the end seemed out of all proportion to the means.

April 14.—Monsieur Provôt came to congratulate Baber on his installation; and told us that the Bishop, Monseigneur Desflêches, had gone to Ch'êng-Tu to see the new Governor-General, who was expected in a few days, and to make complaint before him of the persecutions to which the Christians had been recently subjected in Chiang-Pei-Ling, a small city divided from Ch'ung-Ch'ing by the river Hsiao-Ho. Their houses had been surrounded, pillaged, and burnt, and the inmates driven away with circumstances of great cruelty; some of the Christians who ventured to return had been suddenly attacked and murdered, and the persecution had been continued for some weeks, during which time thirty persons had been killed, some being cut into pieces and thrown into the river. The officials had taken little notice of the outrage, not even holding so much as an inquest on the corpses, merely reporting to head-quarters that a slight disturbance had occurred, and the Tao-Tai, who, as was affirmed by some, secretly instigated them, never raised a finger to repress the outrages.

Monsieur Provôt gave us news of Tibet. He had received a letter from Monseigneur Chauveau, Bishop of Ta-Chien-Lu, who said that a report had spread all over Western China and Tibet of the expected arrival of British and Russian missions at Lassa; that this report had caused a most profound sensation; that the Lamas were urging the people to refuse admittance to foreigners, and that forces were assembling on the frontier.

There can be no doubt that a great change has come over the feelings of the Tibetans since the days when Bogle visited Lassa, and was so well received. There are two causes that may have combined to make the Tibetans afraid of Europeans. Firstly, our power in India has so enormously extended that the Tibetans say, with much justice, 'Wherever an Englishman comes he soon possesses the country; once we let an Englishman enter ours, we shall lose it.' The second adverse cause is the presence of the missionaries. In the time of Bogle there had been few attempts on the part of these to approach Tibet, and in those days the Lamas had no fear of foreigners upsetting their power and their religion. But since then there have been many missionaries on the borders; and these being the only foreigners the Tibetans know, they naturally fear for the supremacy of their faith.

In the days of Bogle and Manning, and even as late as the time of Huc, it appeared that among the Tibetans themselves neither Lamas nor people offered any objections to the approach of Europeans; but that all the opposition, great as it was, came entirely from the Chinese officials. Since that time, however, it would appear that the Lamas, who absolutely rule the people, have conceived a violent hatred to foreigners,

and have arrived at a determination to exclude them by every means in their power.

I had some musical boxes with me which I had bought in London, thinking that they would be useful as presents. I now found that out of six the three best would not work, and imagining that they would be rare curiosities, I showed them to our fat fried Mê, and asked him if he thought that there was anybody here who could repair them. 'Oh, yes!' he said, 'and you can buy them for three taels,' about the price I paid in London.

April 15.—A huge official placard was now posted on the door of Baber's house. It was to the effect that Baber had come here solely to look after trade; that he had no connection with the French missionaries; that people were to respect him; that any rioters would be severely punished, &c., &c. This was all very fine, but the details did not quite satisfy the exigencies of the uncompromising Baber, who visited the Fu in the course of the afternoon, and complained that the word England was not written big enough, and had not been put in a sufficiently exalted position on the paper! He also told the Fu that he would have done better to have left out the passage in which it was stated that he was not connected with the French missionaries. The Fu said he did not think that a matter of much consequence. 'Well,' said Baber, 'but suppose an English missionary comes, what will you do then? and I believe there is one now on his way.' The idea of two sorts of foreign religion was a complication that might well have exercised even a more educated mind than that of a Chinese Fu. So Baber promised to try and prevent the spectacle of two sets of missionaries preaching two different creeds.

The Fu, very anxious that the conversation should

not be overheard, conducted a great deal of it in writing, a process that must have made it somewhat tedious.

Whatever its demerits may have been, Ch'ung-Ch'ing was at least a housekeeper's paradise, as the following price list, supplied by Chin-Tai, will serve to show :

Yellow cow-beef (as the beef of an ordinary ox was called)	66 cash a catty.
Buffalo cow-beef	50 „ „
Kid's flesh	120 „ „
The best small chickens	100 „ „
Old cocks (very tough)	90 „ „

Eggs, 6 cash each. Cabbages, 2 or 3 cash.

The exchange made a penny about equal to 22 cash, and a catty is 1⅓ lbs. avoirdupois.

The market, too, was well supplied with fish, liver, kidneys, carrots, turnips, peas, beans, and a vegetable that made a very good imitation of spinach. It was almost impossible to buy sheep, and the kid's flesh was about as tough and tasteless as it usually is in Eastern lands. But with a sack of potatoes, which the French missionaries presented to us, our feasts were by no means scanty.

April 16.—A great deal of noise ushered in the august presence of the Chen-T'ai, who came to pay a visit to Baber, bringing with him, according to Chinese custom, a miscellaneous crowd. In China, during an official visit, it is always necessary to admit almost anyone who wishes to come in, in order that the people may know everything that is going on, and that no conspiracies may be hatched. The name of our visitor, when translated into English, was *Fields-within-Fields.* He served with much credit during the Tai-Ping rebellion, and was present at the siege of Su-Chou, but he said he had never met Gordon.

He was evidently not a man of great intelligence,

for he asked Baber if in England we made glass, as they did in China, from rice.

One of his attendants, with a grin, reminded the worthy Chen-T'ai that not even in the Great Central Nation had people learnt the art of making rice into glass. This did not disconcert him in the least, and saved Baber from the humiliation of being obliged to confess that we had not yet discovered this marvellous process.

My servant, Chin-Tai, had been suffering from rheumatism, and I had asked Mê, the fat Christian, if he could find a doctor. When General *Fields-within-Fields* had gone with his crowd, Chin-Tai came to me looking particularly happy. He told me that three doctors had been to see him, and that each had prescribed for him; I said that I hoped that there would not be the proverbial disagreement. 'No,' said Chin-Tai, 'with three doctors I am sure to get well very soon.'

April 17.—The town of Ch'ung-Ch'ing is built so crookedly, and with such tortuous streets, that the people are compelled to use the terms 'to the right,' 'to the left,' in giving directions about the way to any place. Ordinarily, in China, the towns are built with a certain amount of regularity, and the people say 'go north' or 'go south,' &c. They become so habituated to this that, even out in the open country, they use the same expressions, having, as a rule, not the most remote conception as to where the north point really is. This custom has had the effect of impressing on foreigners generally a most exaggerated belief in a Chinaman's knowledge of the points of the compass.

We went for a walk one morning on the other side of the river, and took the photographer with us,

and left him to his own devices. When we returned home he told us that the people had thrown stones and bricks at the camera. He said that his attempts had not been very successful. The Chinese people believe that foreigners make a juice out of children's eyes for photographic purposes; they say 'A man, or a dog, or a horse cannot see without eyes, how then can that machine? If it has not got eyes of its own, it must have the eyes of somebody else.' Their logic is unanswerable, especially the brickbats and stones. The next time that Baber's photographer essayed his art, he went out under the guidance of the fat Christian Mô, who could talk to the people in their own dialect; the photographer, who was a Shanghai man, finding the language of Ssŭ-Ch'uan quite unintelligible.

I now began the preparations for my departure, and seeing that here, as everywhere else, money forms the sinews of war, I sent for the banker, on whom bills had been given me at Hankow. He professed himself quite ready to give me any amount of silver, and said he had correspondents at Ch'êng-Tu, so that I could get my money there instead of taking it with me. Of course this was a great convenience, so I arranged for him to give me what was necessary for the journey, and bills for the rest on the Ch'êng-Tu bankers.

Exchange is a matter that in China always gives a good deal of trouble. The tael is, properly speaking, a weight of about $1\frac{1}{3}$ oz. avoirdupois. The term 'tael' is a foreign one, the Chinese word being 'liang.' Almost every province, and often each important city in a province, has its own tael; thus a piece of silver that weighs a tael at Ch'ung-Ch'ing will weigh less than a tael at Ch'êng-Tu; and, as all payments are made by weight, it is necessary to have a balance for

each place. Then the quality of the silver varies; and besides this, in making small payments, there is the further complication of the number of cash, or 'chen,' as the Chinese call them, to the tael; this is of course unavoidable. It costs less to carry a pound of silver one hundred miles than it does to carry the equivalent value of brass; and at places far removed from centres of civilisation, the tendency is, naturally, to bring more to an equality the value of the two metals, just as the values of all goods tend to equalise themselves relatively the greater distance they are carried. But, however unavoidable, the difficulty is none the less troublesome to a traveller, who thus has three things to look to: first, the quality of the silver; secondly, the weight of the tael; and, thirdly, the number of cash to the tael.

I now wished to engage another servant, and a man came to me, and went through the usual formality of knocking his head on the ground.

I asked him if he would be my servant, and travel with me.

Yes, he answered, he was willing to follow me anywhere.

'Very well then,' I said, 'I will pay you seven taels a month.'

Chin-Tai, who was acting as my interpreter, now conversed with him for about half an hour. The dialogue was reduced in English to the laconic statement, 'He says he wants fifteen taels.' This I declined, and Liu-Liu, for such was his name, went away; but he returned *in* a few hours, saying he had quite misunderstood my offer, that he had consulted his brother, and that if I would give him some advance for his wife, and would promise to pay his fare back to Ch'ung-Ch'ing when I had done with him, he

would come with me. All of which meant that he had merely been trying, in accordance with Chinese custom, to get as much as he could. So the compact was sealed, and Liu-Liu (or the Willow) became my servant.

A day seldom passed without visitors. Mê returned triumphant from his photographic expedition; his part of the business had been satisfactorily accomplished; but the photographer's efforts can hardly be said to have been crowned with success. He could not show us much except some clouded glasses, and I never heard that any pictures were subsequently achieved. The banker came in again while Mê was with us, and Hsuan of the perpetual tongue.

There are no mules in this part of the province, and it was therefore necessary to look for coolies, but as I was able to send most of my goods by water, I did not require a great number of carriers. I had to buy a chair also for myself to ride in, because, in this province, a chair is the usual means of locomotion; and to have travelled otherwise would not only have been against the inexorable law of custom, but would have entailed a loss of dignity that might have been inconvenient. After I had once started, however, I rarely rode in the chair, except when entering or leaving a large town; in the country I invariably walked, or rode on a pony. The chair was, nevertheless, invaluable for carrying a few things in, for with four coolies, and no one riding in it, it could always travel very fast, and in the plains could even keep up with me when I was walking, so that when I arrived at my destination, the chair was seldom far behind, and I had not to wait an interminable time for all the odds and ends, writing and drawing materials, &c., &c., that I wanted immediately.

In a large city like Ch'ung-Ch'ing there was no difficulty in finding any number of coolies, and Chin-Tai soon found a coolie-master willing to provide for all my wants.

April 24.—An elaborate agreement that would have refreshed the heart of a lawyer in Chancery Lane was now drawn up between this coolie-master and myself: detailing specifically what I might and what I might not do; the places at which we were to halt; and how long we were to stop at them; and the extra amount to be paid, in case I wilfully delayed on the journey. The coolie-master on his side pledged himself to use all reasonable care and forethought for the safety of my goods, and to arrive at places specified within a certain time. But, unlike English documents, this charter once drawn up and verbally agreed to by the coolie-master and myself required neither witness nor signature; but being confided to the depths of my pocket, was as valid, according to Chinese usage, as the most formal document that ever issued from Lincoln's Inn.

This confidence that people in China have in one another is a feature in the character of the people that has been strangely unnoticed by foreign writers. Merchants in China rely implicitly on one another; indeed, if they did not, all business would come to an end at once. In my position I was over and over again compelled to trust the Chinese with large sums of money without receiving any receipt, and in other ways to rely on their probity to a far greater extent than I should have trusted Europeans, or Chinese if I could have avoided it. But I was never deceived in the smallest degree, nor did I lose anything during all the time I was travelling. Of course if I had set my wits against those of the Chinese I should

have been taken in continually; and if I had tried to drive bargains, I should certainly never have succeeded. A Chinaman, if he is selling anything, will always ask as much as he thinks he can get, even if he knows it to be ten times the value of the article; but amongst the respectable Chinese there is a strong feeling of commercial morality. It probably arises not from any natural inborn virtues, but from the necessities of the case; for there is no reason to suppose that the Chinese race forms an exception to the general rule of humanity, the heart of which is declared to be by the highest Authority deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. If a Chinese weaver adulterated his silk, it would be known at once, he would be a marked man, and his trade would cease. If the English manufacturer never sold his goods at a greater distance than one hundred miles from his doors, it is probable that he also would find the advantages of honesty in his policy. Necessity is not only the mother of invention, but the origin of all custom; and custom in time becomes not law but something even more binding.

When I called to say good-bye to the missionaries, I found that they were firmly persuaded that political missions from every quarter were being poured into Tibet, and that Baber and I were connected in some mysterious manner with the inscrutable purposes of these expeditions. When I assured them that I had nothing whatever to do with Government or Government missions, and that I was a private individual travelling for my own objects, they smiled incredulously, as if unwilling to be thought simple-minded enough to believe so foolish a story; and even with the proverbial politeness of Frenchmen, they could hardly help showing that they thought Albion was as

perfide as ever; and if reasonable Europeans could not believe it, how could it be expected that the Chinese would? In fact, they never did; from first to last I passed for an important official on some secret service, and was invariably treated as such.

April 26.—Everything was at length ready for a start, and I found coolies sitting about, waiting for their loads to be adjusted. A chair that I had bought was now fresh from the painter and decorator; there were, besides, small chairs that were hired for the servants, and a pony about eleven hands high was ready to be saddled. Twenty coolies sufficed for my luggage; besides these there were four coolies for my chair, four for the chairs of the servants, and one man, who glorified himself with the title of Ma-Fu, with the pony.

Baggage in this part of the world is carried in cages made of bamboo. Long bamboos run along the top of two sides of the cage, cross pieces connect the ends, and these rest on the shoulders of the coolies. This is a very convenient method of carrying baggage, as the loads can be packed and unpacked in a few minutes; moreover, there is no jolting or knocking about, and the most slender box might be carried in this way for weeks or months without getting any harm; on mules or in carts the baggage is terribly knocked about, and of these, carts are certainly by far the worst. I have seen new cartridge boxes, fresh from an English gunmaker, broken to pieces and rendered utterly useless in two days of cart travel. In fact, for mule or cart travelling, there is nothing like real solid English leather; and a box or portmanteau well made of this material will survive even these terrible trials.

Dividing the luggage into portions of equal weight,

and arranging the loads properly, occupied some time; the coolies can measure the weight of a load very exactly by simply trying it. They are so accustomed to a certain weight that they can tell immediately whether it is too much. In doing this, they stand to the cross bars, take hold of them with their hands, which for this purpose they always cross, and just lift the load once or twice off the ground.

My fat friend Mê came to see me off; and with a hearty shake of the hand I said good-bye to Baber, whom I hoped to see in the course of a few weeks. Without this expectation I should not have parted with a light heart from one who had been a cheery companion for so many weeks. But 'Dieu dispose,' and I still have to look forward to the pleasure I hoped for so long ago.

I started in my chair, and as, with the exception of a short ride in the city, this was the first time I had tried this method of progression, I found that dignity and discomfort were in about equal proportions, for to one unaccustomed, the motion, especially in hilly countries, is very disagreeable. When I was well clear of the town I descended, and found walking preferable. The road ran for some distance by the side of the river, winding about amongst hills five hundred to a thousand feet high, sometimes shaded by hedges of pomegranates from the sun, which was now becoming powerful. The hill-sides were dotted with the white-walled Ssŭ-Ch'uan farmhouses in their clumps of bamboos, looking the very emblems of peace. Yew trees often sheltered fine large graves; and here and there, under a fine banyan, there would be one of the small religious shrines which the Europeans call *joss*-houses, from a corruption of the Portuguese 'Deos,' God. This term is applied to temples and

shrines of all sizes: from the gorgeous buildings, the pride of some important city, to the roughly carved stone found by the wayside, which may be nothing more elaborate than a solid block, two or three feet high, cut into the form of a gable at the top, with a hollow chipped out in front for burning incense in.

At this time of the year, pious people bring paper money to the shrines and temples; and in the neighbourhood of one of these the roads are strewn with such amazing quantities of this rubbish, that the traveller fancies himself again at school enjoying the sport of a paper chase.

Theoretically, real money is brought to these places, and put on the shrine as an offering. No doubt in the forgotten days of dim antiquity this was done; but long ago the eminently utilitarian spirit of the Chinese conceived the idea of paper money, which is manufactured, in the vicinity of most temples, with a machine something like a gun-wad cutter, in imitation of copper cash—another proof, if proof were wanting, that the Chinese have now no religious belief whatever, and that their elaborate ceremonies are no more than customs hallowed only by their age.

The road was paved; it was in excellent repair, and about six feet wide, very broad for a Chinese road. There was some opium; but not one tenth of the land cultivated was planted with that crop. There was also a little wheat; but nearly the whole ground was given up to rice. The water was now on the paddy-fields, and the country from the top of the hills looked as if it were flooded. I met very little traffic of any kind, and after a walk of twenty miles I found a fair inn at Pai-Shi-Yi-Ch'ang.

April 27.—The streets in this place were fairly clean, and not quite so narrow as is usually the case

in China. They were all covered over with matting to keep out the sun; and at the early hour of our start there were few people about.

Our course lay in a south-westerly direction, across a wide valley, amongst low undulating hills; everything was very green, fresh, and, as nearly all the rice fields were under water, there was very little dust. The coolies in the fields were busy at work raising water from the lower to the upper terraces, sitting under the shelter of big umbrellas; and from the top of a hill these looked like a number of gigantic mushrooms dotted about over the plain below.

The method in use is as follows:

A small trough is laid from the lower to the upper level. The trough is square, and open at both ends. An endless rope with floats on it passes over two wheels. The floats exactly fit the trough, and bring the water up. The wheels are turned by treadmills, on which the coolies work all day in the sun, nearly naked, sheltered by the big umbrellas, and fanning themselves the while. The use of fans amongst the Chinese is rather a novel sight at first. Everyone carries a fan; the very chair coolies as they run along are fanning themselves; the coolies resting by the roadside sit with fans; travellers on horseback, and shopkeepers at their doors, none are without fans; and I very soon adopted the universal custom.

I halted for breakfast at a little wayside tea-shop, or restaurant: merely a roofed shed of mud, with no wall in the front, and the back partly open. A partition of mud, three feet high, divides the private residence of the family from the public part of the building; and in one corner there is a fireplace for cooking. The main body of the room is occupied by little tables and narrow benches. In China benches

are never more than three feet long and six inches wide.

Here the customers sit down, drink tea, and call for the dishes they desire; generally a little rice and chopped vegetables; or if particularly rich they may indulge in bean-curd cakes, or some of the innumerable sweatmeats always for sale, such as toffee flavoured with ginger, and hardbake made with walnut instead of almonds.

In the afternoon the road running in a westerly direction crossed the general line of drainage, and whenever it passed over one of the parallel ridges, which here ran about north and south, it ascended by a gorge to the summit, where a wall was usually carried for some distance along the crest. The road led through a strong gate, with places for a portcullis, and descended by another narrow gorge; the pass was thus made into a strong position that would be very difficult to force. In many places people were repairing these walls, though against what enemy it would be difficult to say.

My servant, Liu-Liu, who, like all new brooms, was very useful for the first day or two, managed to keep up with me, a success my other servants never achieved. He seemed, however, to share with the British tourist the delusion that the louder an unknown language is spoken the more intelligible it is. At times, when he thought I ought to understand him, the drums of my ears ran risks that long afterwards I trembled to think of. Directly we arrived at an inn, he used to send the coolie with the gigantic kettle of 'hot water,' for which it was customary to call, the tea always being understood. The Chinese always drink boiling tea if they can get it, and in a very short time I became so habituated to the hot drinks that

I preferred them to anything cold. In these paddy-field countries unboiled water is very dangerous, and it is therefore an enormous advantage to be able to get tea; for however poor the leaves may be, it is certain to be made with absolutely boiling water, and so all danger from drinking it is avoided.

April 28.—Our route kept rather to the south of west, and skirted another range of hills, running north and south, which ends near here, the road turning its flank. The landscape was exceedingly pretty; for the valley between the two ranges was not flat, but undulating, with charming clumps of trees and a great deal of wood on the hill-sides. The cultivation was still nearly all rice, but there was much more opium than I had noticed before. In the poppy fields the petals had now all fallen from the flowers, and the people were scraping a thick, black, viscous fluid from the outside of the seed-pods with knives.

There were great numbers of strawberries by the road-side. Like wood strawberries in appearance, they were very red, and looked delicious; but they tasted like grass, and were said to be poisonous. They have a yellow flower.

We halted for breakfast at Yung-Ch'uan-Hsien, a good-sized town, where the politeness of the inhabitants overcame their curiosity. The arrival of a European in European costume was an almost unheard-of event, and the process of writing without ink (for I always used a manifold writer) was one that invariably caused the deepest interest; yet in this town, at eleven o'clock in the morning, a very busy time of the day, I sat writing in an inn in the main street with my doors wide open, and not more than two or three people came to look at me, and these stood at a respectful distance.

After leaving this town we struck a river tumbling over some rocks in a little cascade, below which was a delicious-looking pool. We followed up a pretty stream for some distance to a town, where it was crossed by one of the roofed bridges, so common in China. The careful way in which everything is roofed here must strike the eye of any traveller: houses, gateways, bridges, triumphal arches, and, indeed, almost wherever it is practicable to put a roof, there one is sure to be; even the walls are often coped with glazed tiles, so that the timber-work, being built in the most solid manner, and carefully protected from the weather by an efficient covering, lasts an incredible time, even in a country where rains and snow are regular in their occurrence.

I was just preparing to enter the town in state, when I recognised one of our French clerical friends in a chair coming towards me; but the unexpected apparition of a foreigner, in a pair of knickerbockers, looking exceedingly hot, dusty, and untidy, so startled him, that for a moment he did not know me. He had been into the country to pay a visit to some Christians, and was now returning to Ch'ung-Ch'ing.

In the evening I stopped at a quaint inn at the village of T'ai-P'ing-Chên. The only room was a huge barn-like structure, with a loft over it; the ceiling had at one time been papered, but most of the paper was torn off, and hung down in filthy festoons. Under the floor there was a grinding machine and a store of grain. After I was safely established, somebody lit a fire in this place below me; and as the only escape for the smoke was through big holes in the floor of my apartment, I should soon have been stifled by the pungent fumes, had not the people politely put out their fire at my request.

In the night there was a magnificent thunderstorm. I discovered a window that would open, or rather a huge aperture closed by folding shutters; by standing on the bed I could just see out of it, and there was rather a pretty view. As a rule in China it is rare to find either windows or doors placed with any regard to scenery. The Chinese seem to take no pleasure whatever in a view, and their rooms always look out into filthy streets, or close courtyards, often roofed in. There is much to be said in a utilitarian point of view for this taste, because it keeps the rooms cool in summer and warm in winter; but it certainly grates against the feelings to find, in the midst of pretty and sometimes magnificent scenery, all the houses so constructed that nothing can ever be looked at except dirty walls.

There was a hillock with a solitary tree on it about four hundred yards distant, and as I stood watching the storm, I expected every moment that the tree would be struck, for the electric discharges were not more than one thousand feet distant. But the rain that descended like a deluge must have saved it, for it was still standing when I looked out the next morning. The forked lightning that came straight down all round was so continuous that I could almost read by the light; when I went to bed, my room was shaking with the continued crashes of thunder; I awoke in the middle of the night, and it was nearly as violent; and when I rose in the morning, it was still growling sullenly in the distance.

April 29.—The rain in most countries would have increased the difficulties of travel; but China is the land of contrasts; here the roads are all paved, and as in the plains of this fortunate province they are kept in excellent repair, the rain, instead of making

mud, serves to cool the stones, which in the blazing sun become very hot for the feet of the coolies.

The rain had quite left off when we started; and the freshness of the morning was delicious. The watercourses were all brimming; streams ran over the road; the paddy fields were flooded; and the water was rushing in torrents from the upper of these into the lower. The road ran through an undulating, well-wooded country; but the landscape at this time of the year is always more or less spoilt by the paddy fields, which give the appearance of an inundation of muddy water, without any of the picturesque spots in a true flood. The perfect regularity of the fields and terraces is so monotonous that, however much they may be admired in a material sense, they can hardly be considered pleasing from an artistic point of view.

As the inns in this country are constructed for the accommodation of foot passengers and coolies, they are of a different character from those in the north, where nearly all the transport is by mules, and where, in consequence, the inns are arranged as much for the convenience of animals as for the comfort of men. Turning suddenly and unexpectedly out of the main thoroughfare of the town, if the traveller should be in a chair, a wide opened gateway through which he is carried is unobserved, and passing through what appears to be a short and narrow street, he is deposited at the door of the principal room of the inn. The narrow street is in reality the courtyard; and the low barn-like buildings on each side are the less important rooms of the hotel, where fat Chinamen may be seen through the open doors and windows, sleeping, eating, or smoking, and sometimes, though very rarely, reading or writing. The large state-room at the end is seldom occupied; for rather than expend

the few extra cash for additional comfort, a Chinaman, unless he is tolerably rich, or an important official, prefers to live in the little pigsties at the side, and save his money. This is another feature in the Chinese character, and by no means a reprehensible one. Even to a man fairly off, the sum of one cash is a consideration, and to save it he would prefer an inferior article, or take a most astonishing amount of trouble. Amongst Chinese, three-quarters of the conversation is about cash; how Liu has saved one, or how Yang has been foolish enough to spend fifty on something that he could have bought nearly as good for forty-nine.

Every day I was more impressed with the gentleness of the people. After having been accustomed to find myself universally regarded as a fair and legitimate object of ridicule and wonder, it seemed quite strange to be able to come in of an afternoon and sit down to write for a couple of hours quietly before dinner. In many places in this part of the country I was left as much alone as I should have been in England; certainly much more so than a Chinaman, in his long coat, long plait, queer shoes, and huge spectacles, would be in any English market town.

At Jung-Ch'ang-Hsien I had the misfortune to rest at a hotel where the number of travellers was so great that the place appeared to be a small city.

The travelling Chinaman, when he has arrived at his destination, usually divides his time between eating, drinking, smoking, and sleeping; he seldom enjoys any excitement, not from lack of power so much as from want of opportunity. The afternoons and evenings of these people must be appalling in their monotony, and melancholy illustrations of the truth

of Talleyrand's prophetic warning to the young man who did not play cards.

It would have been unreasonable to have expected the three or four dozen inhabitants of this inn to miss so rare an occasion of amusing themselves, and such an expectation would have been completely falsified.

My door was soon blocked up, and the little of the somewhat unsavoury air that had previously entered entirely excluded. The crowd remained gazing at me all the evening, and when I went to bed it had not altogether dispersed.

April 30.—Jung-Ch'ang-Hsien is on the left bank of a river ninety yards wide, which we crossed by a bridge just above a rapid. There were a good many boats, doubtless on their way to Ch'ung-Ch'ing. We followed down the right bank of the river for about a mile and a half, and then struck west, through an undulating country, towards a range of hills running north and south, the sides of which were more wooded than cultivated. A town beyond seemed to do a thriving trade in red terra-cotta goods. Tea-pots, snuff-bottles, pipes, and all sorts of odds and ends were exposed in almost every other shop. The streets were not crowded, and the people paid very little attention to me as I passed through.

A little further on I turned into a tea-shop for breakfast, and sat down at a table on which there were about half a dozen cups, with a pinch of tea at the bottom of each. The boiling water was poured into one of them immediately, and the refreshing draught was ready as soon as it was cool enough for my pampered throat. One of the waiters went round the room every five minutes or so, and filled up the cups with boiling water from a huge kettle. While

my breakfast was being cooked I looked round. The tea-house, open along the whole length of its front, faced the road, but a wooden wall, coming down from the roof to within seven feet of the ground, kept out the heat and glare; and a thick straw matting, projecting from the top of the open part, cast a grateful shade across the road, tempting the voyagers to stop and have a dish of tea. As I sat facing the front, a short, benevolent-looking old man, with a grey beard and mustachios, stood behind a counter at my left. At his back there were a number of small square drawers, and above these some porcelain jars and bottles contained the various ingredients for preparing his savoury dishes. Some big wooden tubs for rice or grain were at his side, and a little child holding his hand joined in the gaze of wonder that some coolies, leaning against the front of the counter, bestowed on me, as over their trivial pipes they discussed my remarkable appearance. The cooking-place was on my right, with a smoke stack passing out through a hole in the roof. The centre of the room was occupied by small square tables, and there all my coolies were having their breakfast, and enjoying the unwonted treat of plenty of time to eat it in. That they found this a luxury I could guess from the way in which some of them dallied with their beans before commencing serious operations on the rice, instead of shovelling the latter down in the fashion of the boat coolies on our old junk. The people here seemed very fond of broad beans roasted. I watched several of the coolies commence their meal with a dish of these; one man in particular took them up one by one with his chopsticks, and chose them carefully from his little dish with the air of a gourmet, who feels that, having plenty of leisure, it will never do to

throw away the opportunity of playing the epicure. Directly on my right, and near one corner of the room, a huge tub, kept warm by steam, contained the rice (boiled in some other place), and while I was looking on, a coolie came in with a fresh tub, taking away the other, which had just been finished. An attendant dips a large wooden ladle into the steaming tub, and takes out the rice; with an artistic turn of the wrist he puts it into a bowl, about as large as a small slop basin, and, giving it a dexterous pat, the clean white grains are piled up in a smooth and regular dome above the edge of the cup. This tub of rice gives plenty of work to the attendant. Another coolie demands a second portion. In an instant the waiter fills a bowl, walks quickly to the customer, and transfers the contents to the other cup without dropping a grain. The scene is full of life: the busy attendants with their bowls of rice, or pots of boiling water; others cooking, and more taking away the bowls and dishes that have been used. All the time coolies on their journey pass in front to and fro at the quick, half-walk half-run, sort of gait they adopt. Now a big chair, with red outside, and an official hat fastened behind, followed by a man with a red umbrella, proclaims an official of some importance; but the drawn blinds prevent my seeing what he is like. Now a very small and shabby two-coolie chair comes along, with a fat Chinaman half asleep and stupid with several hours of this unpleasant motion. Perhaps the coolies stop here for their food; but the sallow Chinaman sits stolidly without moving until they have finished. Most of the people at this time of day pass the tea-house, but some turn in for a little refreshment; and others, walking straight to where a tub of cold water is standing, rince out their

mouths, and proceed on their journey. As a counter-foil to all this busy activity, across a field, I can see, about a quarter of a mile away, a clump of bamboos lazily waving their tops to the gentle breeze, and sheltering a house the roof of which just appears above a hedge of pomegranates and brambles. This is backed up by a fine clump of firs and willows, standing in bold relief against the liquid blue of a range of hills in the extreme distance.

About sixteen and a half miles from Jung-Ch'ang-Hsien we passed through another town; and at twenty miles, on gaining the summit of a low ridge, I could see the pagoda, which I felt sure dominated Lung-Ch'ang-Hsien, our destination. This is a seven-storied pagoda, with a good-sized tree growing on the top of it, which, at this distance, looked like the steering sails of an English windmill. Another three-quarters of a mile brought us to a town on a good stream twenty yards wide; this was crossed by a bridge of large stone piles, the tops of which were carved into the heads of gigantic dragons, gryphons, and other monsters. This must be the dragon bridge mentioned by Cooper.

Before reaching the city, we were made aware of its vicinity by several triumphal arches erected across the road. These triumphal arches are not only witnesses to the artistic feeling of the people of Ssŭ-Ch'uan, but they are, even in the excellence of their sculpture, characteristic of the realism so conspicuous a feature in the Chinese, and one that makes them so eminently a matter-of-fact people.

Neither in their buildings nor in their pictures is anything left to the imagination of the spectator, and the artists themselves seem devoid of this quality.

These triumphal arches that are so frequent

in Ssŭ-Ch'uan are generally of stone, and on the superstructure at the top are elaborate carvings in relief; these are most artistic in their execution, and represent officials administering justice, and various other scenes of domestic and public life, in which the expressions of the faces are caught with a wonderfully sympathetic spirit, and delineated with a masterly hand.

Yet in everything there is the Chinaman's want of ideality; his carvings represent nothing but what he has absolutely seen over and over again with his own eyes; he is quite incapable of forming an idea of anything beyond. His pictures are the same: insects of life size, magpies on willow trees, bridges, ponds, and hills, all realized, but with not enough imagination in the whole to produce even perspective. Even in the representation of Hell we saw the other day there was no imagination. The demons were people such as themselves, with painted faces; and the tortures such as might be inflicted by their own officials. Of heaven they have no idea, and that they never try to conceive. Everything they do is material and realistic, and imagination does not exist in their nature. From imagination springs the power of inception, or, in other words, originality; and, as might be expected, or rather as must follow by a natural sequence, the Chinese are remarkable for their want of originality. In the course of ages, as the necessity arises, as population increases, and life becomes more difficult, the law of the survival of the fittest may come into play, and the reign of intellect begin. But at present, with the want in the national character of the power of inception, they must be for a long time to come dependent on the aid of foreigners.

I came from Marseilles to Hong-Kong with two

Chinese who had been to Europe to learn European naval tactics, European ship-building, and European navigation. They were returning to their country no doubt highly instructed and much benefited; but one of them, by the permission of the captain, who wondered greatly, copied the log of the ship carefully every day. He was under the impression that if he should ever take a ship from Marseilles to Hong-Kong he would be able to do it by carefully sailing the same course.

I had a long ride through the main street of Lung-Ch'ang, and on arrival outside an inn found there was no room; but although I waited here some time, until the coolie, who was sent to explore, could return, the people of the town passed me without even troubling themselves to turn their heads. The next inn was but a few paces distant, and passing up the principal court I turned into a side yard that led to the room where I was lodged.

This was a remarkable contrast to my last night's lodging. In front there was a large courtyard, shut in by high walls. My room led into a smaller one, that opened out behind into another very narrow court, sheltered by a vine trailing over a bamboo trellis. My room was at least twenty feet high, and I appreciated the delights of quiet after the disagreeables of the previous evening. Ssŭ-Ch'uan has always been celebrated for the comfort, cleanliness, and size of its inns, which are generally far superior to those of other provinces, but this was, even in Ssŭ-Ch'uan, exceptional, and during all my travels I certainly did not find half a dozen others that could vie with it in any way.

The head man of the coolies came in, and we had a long discussion. He wanted me to go to the fire-

wells at Tzŭ-Liu-Ching with only a few coolies, and let him go on with the rest by a different and shorter road. He said that we could effect a junction in four days, and that the road to the fire-wells was so bad that no coolies could travel fast on it; but I remarked, 'Twenty coolies can go as fast as one.' Then he said the inns were small, and there would be no room for so many.

He was, of course, only inventing excuses, and when I insisted on all going with me he made no further remark.

It is always customary to pay the coolies a portion of their wages every two or three days; and here it was necessary to go through one of the fearful cash operations. I gave Chin-Tai some lumps of silver, which, as usual, the money-changer found of a less weight than I made them myself.

May 1.—Leaving Lung-Ch'ang Hsien we crossed the river, and turning aside from the main road to Ch'êng-Tu struck into a bypath. But although not so wide, and in a few places out of repair, it was excellent for travelling on; winding about amongst low hills of sandstone, where there were many clumps of firs, and groves of orange-trees, that coming into blossom made the air fragrant with their perfume. There was not very much land under opium cultivation; wherever the fields had been devoted to that crop I noticed that the seed-pods had already been cut off the heads of the poppies. These seed-pods are threshed out with a wooden flail; the seed is winnowed, and the husks put in the sun to dry. I saw a little Indian corn also about a foot high.

We passed through one town after about eight and three-quarter miles, and went on to Wang-Chia-Ch'ang, a village fifteen miles from Lung-Ch'ang.

This was a wretched place, and my room would hardly have been called a good cattle-shed. The people here were in the middle of a fast, and for three days would eat neither eggs, fish, flesh, nor fowl; nor would they allow Chin-Tai to cook any of these in their cooking apparatus, or at their fires.

The sight, however, of others sinning only increased their self-glorification; and far from being scandalised, when I openly devoted myself to eggs and beefsteaks, they were highly gratified at being able to reflect on their own superior piety. In fact the pleasure was so great that no one in the place could deprive himself of it; as usual the door burst from the pressure, and all the people and children tumbled in on the top of one another. The scuffle roused my tired dog, who began to bark, at which the people, who had never before heard such a fearful noise, scattered and fled.

I marched in the afternoon to Niu-Fu-Tu.

The night was exceedingly sultry, and not a breath of air seemed able to penetrate even to the streets, much less to the recesses of the close and stuffy inn; but early in the night the distant growling of the thunder, and the frequent flashes of lightning, presaged another storm; and as I lay down under a sheet I exclaimed with the pious Wang-Erh, 'Oh, Mane Buddha, I knock my head!' and with good reason, for the tempest broke, the rains descended, and great was the fall of the thermometer.

May 2.—It was not with much regret that I left the gloomy and cavernous inn, where at three o'clock on a sunshiny afternoon I had been forced to light candles for my writing.

Crossing the river, here one hundred and fifty yards broad, we found the farmers transplanting the paddy into the rice-fields.

I breakfasted at a tea-house open at the back, where, in a sort of courtyard behind, there was a place roofed in, and raised like the stage of a play-house. This was very satisfactory, and I was able to eat, drink, read, or write with as much freedom as an actor in a theatre; it was pleasanter also for the spectators, who were able to see without treading on each other to any very great extent.

In the afternoon I marched to a place called Hsien-Tang, on the left bank of a stream one hundred and fifty yards wide. The boatmen here were very willing to impart their geographical information, but it was not worth much; all they knew for certain was that this stream was the same as the Niu-Fu-Tu river; but as, marching west, we had left that river flowing from north to south, and we were now on the left or eastern bank of another stream flowing similarly from north to south, I preferred my reasoning to their local knowledge. We here hired boats; and chairs, pony, coolies, and servants were safely put on board, just as a thunderstorm broke right over us; the thunder came in sharp cracks almost simultaneously with the lightning, and a drenching rain that fell made us thankful that there was a canopy over the boat that kept us all dry. The storm passed as suddenly as it had arisen. We ascended the river some little distance, disembarked, rode across a neck of land, and in fresh boats went up the same river to within an hour's ride of Tzŭ-Liu-Ching.

Approaching this town the number of tall scaffoldings around it at once attract the notice of a traveller: some right on top of the hills, others on the sides, and a few close down to the river. At a distance they look just like the tall chimneys of some manufacturing town in England. The town is prettily

situated on the river, which is about one hundred yards wide, and is here bunded back; its banks are steep, and run straight up to little hills about two hundred or three hundred feet high, where, as the cultivation is not very close, there is a great deal of fresh green grass.

The inhabitants of this place have the reputation of being very rude, but I nowhere in China found more civil people.

The town is a wretched place, and its people bear all the indications of their miserable poverty. I had what seemed an interminable ride through narrow and more than usually dirty streets, all of them staircases of the steepest and worst description. The shops were very inferior, and the only novelty I remarked was a Chinaman sitting in an easy chair.

As a rule, a Chinaman sits in the usual high, stiff, straightbacked chair, so painfully familiar to any European who has penetrated into these regions. I never before saw anything like a lounge, but here there were low chairs with sloping backs, and a semicircular projection to fit into the neck, very like the cane chairs so much in use by Europeans in Singapore or Ceylon. Amongst the Chinese none but very old men use them, and a youth would be guilty of the most gross disrespect who should seat himself on an easy chair, or even loll about on an uneasy one.

My sedan-chair was put down for some minutes in the middle of the main street; a few woe-begone-looking people and children with pinched faces came to look, but seemed to take but little interest; and when we moved off and turned into a by-lane, not a dozen people thought it worth while to follow me to the inn.

This was really a fine building, with three courts separated from one another by strong gates. I had a

capital room, opening on to a yard where there were a few flowers. The surrounding rooms were occupied by respectable well-to-do people; and the quiet of the place was most delightful after the noise and hubbub that there is usually in the courtyard of an inn, even when a crowd of men and boys are not fighting for a look at the foreigner. In most inns in this part of China the front court is more or less of a restaurant; people are continually coming and going, coolies shouting, customers quarrelling with the landlord about a cash, itinerant vendors of patties and cakes shouting out their wares, all at the top of their voices; while here there was nothing but the croak of the bull frog, and the distant bark of some unquiet dog, varied by the low hum of conversation in an adjoining room.

I found the dogs about here more savage than the ordinary Chinese cur, who usually beats a speedy retreat at the motion of picking up a stone. But there was a sense of independence and a democratic spirit about the dogs of this neighbourhood. They had no respect for anything, not even for good blood; and the life of poor Tib, whose valour was not equal to his breeding, was made very burdensome to him.

The landlord of this inn was a Christian, or, as Chin-Tai put it, 'he liked the French Joss.' He expressed great pleasure at seeing me, and after my dinner came to pay me a visit. Our conversation soon descended into the trivialities usual under similar circumstances. I asked him if he knew what was the annual produce of salt. 'Oh yes,' he said, 'a great deal.' 'But how many catties?' I continued. He thought that there would be a vast number. But did he not know what number? Yes, for there were a great many people always at work. 'But how many pits

are there ?' I said, trying another tack. He thought that there might be a thousand, but of these a large proportion were not working.

He then looked at all my things, asked what everything was for, and above all, he wanted to know the cost of each. Amongst my dressing apparatus there was a relic of European travel that could hardly be considered a *sine quâ non* in China, a railway key. He asked Chin-Tai what it was. Chin-Tai was quite equal to the occasion, and I was much interested at the readiness with which he evolved out of his own inner consciousness, a long and elaborate dissertation on the uses of an article of which, by no possibility, could he have known anything.

Eventually, when his curiosity was satisfied, I extracted from him, after much cross-examination, that salt went from here to I-Ch'ang, Ch'ung-Ch'ing, and Kwei-Yang-Fu, but not to Ch'êng-Tu-Fu. He told me that the people were wretchedly poor, and said that no foreigner had been here before except the French missionaries, who always dress, talk, and travel as Chinese. Before going away he informed me that he liked my cigars and my claret, and hinted that a small quantity of either one or the other would be a welcome gift.

May 3.—He came again in the morning to take me to see his salt wells, for he was part proprietor of a very extensive establishment.

We crossed the river by a good bridge, and after partaking of the inevitable cups of tea we proceeded to the works.

Here some of his people were engaged in boring one of the holes ; this was already 2,170 feet deep, the average rate of boring being, if all went well, about two feet a day, but they said that they often broke

their things, that accidents happened, and that it was thirteen years since this well had been commenced.

The jumper for boring is fastened to a bamboo-rope attached to one arm of a lever; the weight of three men who step on to the other arm raises the instrument, the men then leap nimbly off the lever on to some wooden bars fixed for the purpose, and the jumper falls.

Another workman stands at the mouth of the bore, and each time the jumper is lifted he gives a slight twist to the rope; the rope untwisting gives a rotatory motion to the jumper.

This operation is continued all day, the coolies employed showing the most extraordinary and untiring activity.

A few yards off was a finished fire-well, somewhat deeper than the one in progress; a bamboo-tube about three feet long had been put into the mouth of this boring, and some clay was plastered over the upper end to prevent the bamboo from burning. Up this well, and through the bamboo, the gas ascends from the bowels of the earth, and is lighted at the top; when the light was extinguished the odour of the gas was very powerful of sulphur, and very slight of naphtha; the latter smell was imperceptible when the gas was burning.

At no great distance was a brine-pit, which, I was informed, was two thousand and some hundreds of feet in depth, and about three inches, or perhaps a little more, in diameter at the top; immediately over the mouth was erected a scaffolding a little over a hundred feet high.

To draw the brine from this well, a bamboo-tube, a hundred feet long, open at the top and closed at the bottom by a valve, serves as a bucket. A rope,

fastened to the upper end of this, passes over a pulley at the top of the scaffolding and round an enormous drum; this drum, turning on a vertical axis, was eight or nine feet high, and about twenty feet in diameter. Four buffaloes are yoked to this, and thus the rope is wound up. Near the end the rope is marked with bits of straw, like a lead-line on board ship, so that a man watching knows when it is near the end, and warns the drivers. The process of raising this bamboo once, occupied ten minutes. There is a driver to each buffalo. The bamboo being raised from the well, a coolie pushes the end over a receptacle, opens the valve with his fingers, and allows the brine to escape. When the water has been let out, the buffaloes are unyoked, and the bamboo and rope descend of themselves. This sends the drum round with a frightful velocity, which, in rotating, of course produces a violent wind. The 'break' for this is simplicity itself; a few strips of bamboo pass horizontally half round the drum, and both ends are made fast to the wall. These strips hang quite loose until a coolie, leaning against them, tautens them up, checks the pace of the drum, and stops it in a very few seconds. The brine thus raised is conducted to the evaporating-pans over the fire-wells I had already seen.

In this establishment, by no means the largest in the place, there are employed forty coolies and fifteen buffaloes, the latter in a stable kept beautifully clean (a most remarkable thing in China). They produce here 8,000 to 10,000 catties (10,000 to 13,000 lbs. avoirdupois) of salt per month; the proprietor pays no duty, but sells it for eighteen to twenty cash a catty ($\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $\frac{3}{4}d.$ per lb. avoirdupois); the purchaser then sends it away by coolies, paying duty at the

barriers, 300 cash (13½*d.*) per coolie-load, whatever that happens to be; it generally runs from about 160 to 200 catties (210 to 260 lbs. avoirdupois).

In some places they have the fire without the brine, and at a place about five miles up the river there is brine but no fire; the brine is therefore brought down from here in boats, of which I counted about one hundred lying by the bund constructed to keep a sufficiency of water in the river for these vessels.

At the top of the hill, close to the town, there is a fire-well without any brine; the principle of the pump being unknown, the method of raising the water is the clumsy and laborious one of a row of small buckets passing round two wheels, one at the bottom and the other at the top of a tower, of which there are a good many about in different directions. A blindfold mule going round and round at the top is the motive power; the water is thus raised twenty to thirty feet at a time, a trough leading from the top of one to the bottom of the next tower; in this case the brine was lifted seven stages before it finally reached the fire.

Some years ago some Chinese connected with a European firm attempted to introduce pumps; they only had their heads broken for their pains by the coolies, who declared that their labour was being taken away from them; since this no further innovations have been attempted. Baron Von Richthofen states that these wells are lined with tubes of cedarwood. I did not see any lying about, nor was I told of them, but my interpreter was nothing but a servant, and it was difficult to obtain technical information. Baron von Richthofen also states that when a portion of the rock is mashed, clear water is poured into the

hole, and the turbid water raised by a bamboo tube.

The number of pits in this place must be greater than the thousand hazarded by the innkeeper.

The produce of a thousand would be from fifty thousand to seventy thousand tons per annum; but as Tzŭ-Liu-Ching must supply from a third to a half of the salt manufactured in the province, and as, according to the statistics of the Ch'ung-Ch'ing banker, that amounts to 238,000 tons, the out-turn at these wells must be from 79,000 to 119,000 tons; from 1,200 to 2,300 pits would be necessary to furnish that quantity.

I found that the people of Tzŭ-Liu-Ching entirely belied their bad reputation.

I stood about the fire-wells for a couple of hours without being pressed upon in the least; and I never saw people anywhere with a more respectful demeanour.

May 4.—It rained heavily all night, and Chin-Tai, finding himself in very comfortable quarters, and treated as a person of much importance, wanted me to stop here; and held out as an inducement that the hotel-keeper would get me a bladder of gas, that I could then take it home to England, put a piece of cane in the mouth, and light it for the edification of the British public in general. Not even this was, however, sufficient to make me wait, especially as the hotel-keeper promised to send some bladders after me, a promise he fulfilled. I subsequently carried them about for a long time with vague ideas of analysis; but they grew small by degrees, and beautifully less, until they disappeared altogether; and the exact nature of the gas from the wells must for the present remain unknown.

We marched some distance up the river, which winds through green and grassy banks. Either there must be fewer people here than nearer Ch'ung-Ch'ing, for the land is not so closely cultivated, or else the inhabitants do not let their utilitarian spirit run riot to such a frightful extent, and allow something for the picturesque. This certainly makes the landscape more pleasant ; and as there is much less rice cultivation, it is really very charming. The roads, too, are less frequented ; instead of meeting coolies at almost every step, and tea-houses at every quarter of a mile, we only passed one tea-house all the morning, and it would not have been difficult to have counted the coolies.

I halted for breakfast at a tea-house in a small town, where the people were very respectful ; and although they all came to look on, none of them crowded round me. My food and method of eating caused much excitement. I think the Chinese have some reason on their side in the ridicule in which they hold our forks. They say, 'What barbarians ! to eat with a sharp prong, and run the risk of putting out their eyes, or digging a hole in their cheeks' ; and certainly it struck me this morning, when about fifty inquisitive pairs of eyes were watching my every movement, that a fork is not the most convenient implement wherewithal to eat a lightly-poached egg. Our civilisation, indeed, acknowledges this by always serving poached eggs on toast, without which the process would be almost impossible. But however much the Chinese may laugh at a fork, to our biassed minds at all events, chopsticks appear at least equally inconvenient ; and until the opinion of a Persian or a Turk can be obtained on the relative merits of the two weapons, it must remain a moot question, which

is the most difficult for an uninitiated person to manipulate.

As it is with the chopsticks, so with everything else; it is almost impossible for a European to judge of the acts and thoughts of a Chinaman impartially, and without the bias of his own views and education; and on that account we should be the more careful as to the theories we propound ourselves, or the opinions we accept from others.

I stopped for the night at Wei-Yuan-Hsien, where the table of the inn was so filthy, that, habituated as I had become to dirt, I was obliged to get some clean paper and a pot of paste before I could venture to sit down to write.

May 5.—An excellent road took us over low sandstone hills, where the wheat harvest was being gathered from the fertile soil, that before autumn would yield another crop, and where the fruit already forming on the numerous Tung-oil trees heralded the approach of summer. After a pleasant march we arrived at the banks of the Tzŭ-Chou river, a clear stream, here one hundred and fifty yards wide, with very little current. On the opposite side the town of Tzŭ-Chou lay at the foot of a hill, the summit of which, some seventy or eighty feet above the stream, was crowned by a fine temple. Within the walls we could see some extensive yellow-roofed buildings.

We were on the right bank of the river, where there is an extensive suburb that stands on some little sandstone cliffs, about twenty or thirty feet high, where a number of fresh green trees droop gracefully to the water that rolls gently by. A ferry took us across to the town, which had a pleasant aspect, and was very quiet.

May 6.—There was some difficulty in finding a

place to breakfast in at the hamlet I selected for that agreeable entertainment. But at length the genius of Chiñ-Tai pitched upon the village school, and I was installed amongst the youth of the neighbourhood, who must have considered it an excellent diversion to see a foreigner, and a foreign dog, come and eat.

There were about a dozen little boys, from six years of age to twelve, all learning to write. They had a printed exemplar of the characters, which they placed underneath some thin paper, and traced through; their pens being, of course, reeds, and their ink what we always at home miscall Indian ink, but which is, in fact, the ink in ordinary use amongst Chinese of every class. There was a saucer on each of the three tables, and the boys rubbed it up when required. The old teacher came every now and then and patted them kindly on the head, or took hold of their pens and put them in a more correct position in their hands. There seemed no restraint; the children talked to one another, rose up and went outside, seemed to do much as they pleased, and looked very happy, as if their lessons were rather a pleasure than otherwise.

While I was waiting for my breakfast, a regiment of soldiers came by with some discordant horns and drums; they all had red jackets, with the big circle on the breast and between the shoulders, showing the district or regiment to which they belong. They were armed with spears having little square flags at the end, blue, red, and pink; their lance-poles were bamboo, painted with dark rings. They wore blue turbans, and were marching along in an irregular way, like a rabble. One or two of them had old muzzle-loading, single-barrelled muskets, and I also saw a thing that looked more like a very rusty and

ancient duck-gun than anything else. They tramped along with a truculent air, pushing the coolies and people on the road out of their way. It must not be supposed that these were types of the regular Chinese army, for the men that were up in the north-west, fighting with Tunganis and Yacoob Beg, were armed with breechloaders of a very modern description, and had rifled cannon with them. However, I did not pay much attention to the soldiers, for schoolmasters, scholars and all, ran out to see the sight; and I, being entirely eclipsed by the more gorgeous show outside, was left alone; and an opportunity was thus given me to make a rough sketch of the interior of the building.

There was a large recess at the back, about twelve feet wide and two feet deep, in which there was a box with the remains of the burnt-out incense-sticks that pious people come and light here. Above this, and close to the roof, a quaint little god stood in a niche, and a few inscriptions in black on red paper aided to adorn this part of the room. There was no ceiling; a few dirty paper lanterns were suspended from the rafters, and in one corner some coffins in an unfinished condition were a cheerful addition to the ornamentation. On the other side of the schoolroom a wooden god and goddess, about half life-size, hideous creatures, painted red, yellow, and blue, were standing on a table; a few old cobwebby planks, gracefully leaning with an air of *abandon* against the wall, and a black stone tablet, with a long inscription on it, completed the decorations. A few little square tables, with the usual short, narrow benches, formed the accommodation for the scholars, which, in its simplicity, was quite in accordance with the teacher and teaching.

After reading and writing, the whole education of

the Chinese consists in the knowledge of the ancient classics, which in themselves contain many excellent doctrines, but are hardly sufficient to form the beginning, middle, and end of a man's education. Moreover, in these ancient classics, there are many exceedingly difficult and obscure passages; a certain fixed interpretation of these is prescribed by law; and woe betide the unfortunate candidate at an examination, who should venture to think for himself, suggest any new meaning, or cast additional light on that which has once been explained by the sages in a certain way, and of which in consequence any further illumination would be profane.

Can it be possible for any nation to devise a system which would more effectually crush out all germs of originality or thought from the mind of the people?

The show outside, however, passed, and the children returned to watch me once again. I completed my repast, lit a cigar, bid adieu, and gave my thanks to the kind old teacher, and proceeded on my way.

The road all day was on the top of a sandstone ridge running parallel to the river, of which a glimpse was now and then obtained. The sandstone beds are here in a horizontal position; and there are layers of yellow, green, and red; the red being very friable, and mixed with a sort of clay. This geological formation causes two peculiarities in the scenery: first, the tops of the hills are all scarped, giving the appearance of small low towers on the summits; this is caused by the sandstone falling away equally all round, as it does not do when the strata are inclined; and secondly, the terrace cultivation being in accordance with the lay of the strata, in every direction the eye can see perfectly horizontal lines of light or shade,

dark strips of fallow ground alternating with bright yellow streaks of corn.

The road was excellent all day, not very much up and down, but I was surprised at the little traffic on it, and the fewness of the towns and villages. There were the usual triumphal arches at the approach to any place of importance, but none of them of so much finish as those I had seen before. We passed through only two large villages, and arrived at the inn at Nan-Ching-Yi, at five o'clock, after a march of twenty-eight and a half miles.

The room at the inn was very good and clean, with a clean straw ceiling, but unfortunately there was an open drain in the courtyard behind, with a most offensive smell. I rashly sent for a man to have the place cleared out, but he only succeeded in stirring up the filth; but with a saucer of carbolic acid under my nose I circumvented the stench. It would puzzle Mr. Edwin Chadwick to explain how it is that the Chinese can live and flourish in the fearful odours which surround them all their lives. Even if any of us have any faith left in the costly and magnificent systems of drainage that promise so much, it would certainly be shaken by a visit to the Chinese people.

May 7.—We were now fairly in what Baron von Richthofen calls the red basin of Ssŭ-Ch'uan, and a most appropriate title it is. The formation here is a layer of dark red clayey sandstone, and wherever the soil is bare the ground is of a rich dark red brown colour. The tops of the hills are nearly all on the same level, some three hundred or four hundred feet above the river; on their upper slopes there is a good deal of wood and coarse grass; and the bright green of a kind of low thorn contrasts pleasantly with the deep red of the clay. In the bottoms of the valleys,

which are tolerably flat, all the ground is cultivated; but the formation does not seem well adapted for rice.

The villages and towns were very scarce, the country-houses less numerous, and the traffic on the road was not nearly so great as during the first few days after leaving Ch'ung-Ch'ing.

In this part of the country the property is generally marked by boundary-stones; I was told that the land changed hands very frequently; for, there being no law of primogeniture, when a man dies his property is divided, and some of the family soon become too poor to keep up their portion.

Whenever property is sold, the deed of sale must have the official seal, and for this, the usual charge is five per cent. But when a magistrate is leaving, he often puts up a notice to the effect that he will do the job cheap; then all the people who are thinking of buying or selling make up their minds at once, and come and get the seal, sometimes for two per cent.; and the departing official makes a nice little sum of money before giving up his office to his successor.

Disputes occur sometimes, which are settled by appeals to the public of the neighbourhood. The disputants fix on a certain market day, in the nearest market town, and invite all their friends, relatives, and anyone with local knowledge, to drink tea. Everyone being assembled, the question is discussed, and almost always settled amicably in this sort of congress.

Two miles from Nan-Ching-Yi we crossed a stream by a very handsome stone bridge, twenty feet wide, with three really elegant arches; and soon after we came again upon the river, which we followed for a little more than two miles, when we left it,

striking it again four miles further on. Another mile and a quarter brought us to a gorgeous wooden triumphal arch, freshly painted in red, blue, and green; and this presaged the proximity of another town. The road now ran between low walls of mud and loose stones. The peasants behind them were gathering their crops of opium and wheat, and scarcely turned from their occupations to glance at our procession. After a march of eight and a half miles we found ourselves opposite the town of Yang-Hsien. The river was here about one hundred and fifty yards wide, with a current of two miles an hour, flowing between banks about twenty feet high; and after crossing at a ferry we passed through a quarter of a mile of suburb, and then the gate was reached; it was a nice, clean-looking place, with wider streets than usual, and with apparently not much trade; what there was seemed to be a general one in small articles, and I did not notice any speciality. About another nine miles brought us again to the river. We followed it for a couple of miles; and after a march of twenty-five miles reached the very small village of Yang-Chia-Kai.

May 8.—To my great astonishment Chung-Erh took it into his head to walk for an hour in the morning. I could not believe that it was the effect of my extraordinary example, for in China it is considered the height of eccentricity to walk when progression is possible in any other fashion. It is sometimes really piteous to see the coolies painfully ascending some steep hill, carrying a chair in which a fat Chinaman may be sitting, stolid and apathetic; and no matter how steep the hill, a Chinaman, however fat he may be, would never deign to get out for a moment to ease the unfortunate bearers, but would

sit till they dropped dead ; and even then I believe he would wait till a fresh lot came to take him on.[2]

Chung-Erh had asked me for an advance of wages the night before, and when I told Chin-Tai that I had given it to him, he reproached me for doing so. I asked him if he thought that Chung-Erh was likely to run away.

'No,' he answered, 'but he will lose his money.'

So it is possible that, having gambled away all his cash, in his last desperation he staked an hour's ride, and lost it.

Travelling over the same red undulating ground, the crops were much the same, with the addition of large fields of safflower, which here grows to a height of about three feet. Even at the early hour of our start the fields were full of men and women picking the heads off the flowers, which are used for making a dye ; the safflower that comes from this valley being considered superior to any other in China.

The number of houses about here is not very great, and it was four and a half miles before we reached the first village. Another mile, and we debouched into a flat plain, about a mile and a half wide ; and, almost immediately, a low pagoda, four or five stories high, that stands opposite Chien-Chou on the other side of the river, came into sight. This plain was thickly populated, the houses were very close together, and just where we entered it they were only separated from one another by about one hundred yards ; many of them enclosed in mud walls, and sometimes two, three, or even four together shut in by a wall. Here the inhabitants used creaking wheel-

[2] Huc says that chair coolies have so much *amour propre* that they feel hurt if the rider gets out and walks. My experience by no means tends to corroborate the statement.

barrows, very similar to those of Shanghai, but with a much smaller wheel more to the front; in the undulating country through which we had been travelling they were not in use. The river we had been following flows through this plain, but we did not catch a glimpse of it until we had marched seven miles, when the valley narrowing, and the road ascending a little, a wider view was obtained. Soon after, mud walls on both sides surely indicated the outskirts of a large town; and, after nine miles of travelling, we arrived at a tall pagoda of eleven or twelve stories. Here there was a very large temple, and the first triumphal arch on the road. After marching through a considerable suburb, we arrived at the gates of the city of Chien-Chou, celebrated by Huc, who, in his most musical key, has sung the glories of its Kung-Kuan, or official rest-house. The walls of the city are in good repair, and it is a nice, clean-looking place, but at the time of my visit did not seem very busy. It stands on a small stream spanned by a fine roofed bridge, where a good many poor people are seated, with a few odds and ends for sale spread out on the ground before them; and where the inevitable beggar takes his stand, and prays 'your excellency' to bestow a few cash. The main street is a little more than half a mile long, and after leaving it we found very little suburb on the northern side. We now followed the river, a nice, clear stream one hundred and fifty yards wide, running between steep banks with no greater velocity than from one to two miles an hour, except at the rapids. There were a good many boats on it, trade being carried on with Ch'ung-Ch'ing.

From here we followed the banks of the river to Shih-Ch'iao, a dirty place, where the inn was so poverty-stricken that it boasted hardly any furniture

—it was the first house in China in which I had not found at least one chair—and the filthy table was not rendered more attractive by a foul oil-lamp. I converted the straw mat on the bed into a temporary table cloth, and sat down to wait for Chin-Tai, who had been left behind at Chien-Chou.

The walls of the room in which I was sitting were of lath and plaster between strong beams. The inquisitive little boys who were collected outside soon began to pick holes in this, and, had I remained here any length of time, there would hardly have been any wall left. Chin-Tai presently arrived with some capital fish and other stores. At Yang-Chia-Kai he had been able to buy nothing but eggs; but in Chien-Chou he appeared to have run riot in the provision market.

On the outskirts of the town there are some more brine wells, but not so deep or nearly so important as those at Tzŭ-Liu-Ching.

The road now left the river, and again wound about amongst low undulations. Three and a half miles from Shih-Ch'iao a range of tolerably high hills was seen to the north-west, and a mile and a half further we passed through a small village on a stream crossed by a very elegant three-arched bridge of red stone. Soon afterwards the road approached the hills, and, beginning to rise, took us to the summit of the ridge, about eight hundred feet above the level of the river.

Looking back to the south, there was a fine view over the wide expanse of undulating country we had been traversing. The gathering clouds cast varied shadows over the landscape, in which the prevailing red was modified by distance, and pleasantly contrasted with the deep green of the trees. The little

village of Ch'a-Tien-Tzŭ, a few yards over the crest of the hill, was my resting-place for the night; here I found a really clean inn, with fresh whitewashed walls, an unusual absence of smells, and perfect quiet. High up above the plain it was nice and cool; and, with the pretty walks that there must be on the well-wooded hillsides, it would make a charming summer residence for anyone living at Ch'êng-Tu.

May 9.—The next morning we first crossed one or two more ridges of the range, which runs nearly north and south; and, finally, after a pull of three miles, arrived at the highest point, about seven hundred and fifty feet above Ch'a-Tien-Tzŭ. We had again struck some great highway—the road was literally covered with coolies coming and going, and the traffic seemed enormous.

The day was too hazy for a view, otherwise from the summit there would have been a very fine one over the Ch'êng-Tu plain. There was a considerable difference between the state of the crops on the higher and the lower ground; for up above a few flowers still remained on the poppies, and the people were scraping the black viscous matter off the pods. Just over the crest there was a small village, and from here to the bottom (a distance of three and a half miles, with a descent of about one thousand feet) was one succession of tea-houses. The traffic on a road may fairly be estimated by the number of tea-houses. Where there are many coolies passing, there are always numerous restaurants. Here the number was so great that it seemed almost impossible that they could all succeed.

Directly we were again in the plain, we met our old friends the squeaking wheelbarrows, and the little apparatus for raising water from one field to another

was seen at almost every twenty yards. The number of these affairs was very great, owing to the size and flatness of the plain. Sometimes there were half a dozen of them close together; and at intervals, as far as could be seen, the effect of the big umbrellas dotted about the landscape was decidedly comical.

We presently came across a pole with a skull on the top, and underneath it was an inscription that informed all passers-by that the deceased had been executed for stealing silver.

At the village where we halted for breakfast, I ordered Chin-Tai to buy me some fresh paper to put over the table. But the thrifty spirit of the Chinese pervaded even my servants to such an extent that it became a positive nuisance. Thrift, like other virtues, is excellent in itself, but when carried to an excess becomes almost a vice. In this case, Chin-Tai expended every artifice that his intellect could devise, before he could consent to disgorge the few cash necessary. A feather will show the direction of the wind; and a trivial example of this kind serves to indicate the bent of the Chinese mind.

I sent Chin-Tai on to Ch'êng-Tu to look out for a comfortable place, and determined to spend an hour or two here, to give him time to make arrangements; but the house was even dirtier than usual; and, as well as the yard, was crowded with people, who all appeared to be quarrelling; whilst the noise and turmoil so far exceeded anything that I had been accustomed to, even in this land of talk, that I left it, and after half an hour's march found a grass field, about a quarter of a mile away from the road, with a delightful overhanging hedge, under which I sat for two hours, sheltered from the sun, and 'far from the madding crowd.' Here I smoked a peaceful cigar, only dis-

turbed by the determination of the pony to roll on the ground with my saddle on his back, and the apparently equally obstinate resolution of the Ma-Fu to let him do it. I was quite at a loss to understand how a grass meadow could find a place in this rice plain. But here it was, and about three hundred yards away the foliage of a thick dark clump of trees was reflected from a paddy field that imagination might have converted into an ornamental sheet of water. To the right a wood of pines crowned the summit of a little knoll, and altogether the scene was very pleasant.

After this I went on to the capital deliberately, to give Chin-Tai plenty of time, and halted at every tea-house by the road-side, much to the delight of the chair-coolies, who dearly loved to stop every half-hour or so, and get a cup of tea, or a bowl of rice.

I was rather unfortunate in the time of my arrival at Ch'êng-Tu-Fu; for the examinations were now being held. These always bring thousands into the capital from every part of the province; and, in addition to this, the provincial governor-general was just leaving, and a new one being installed. Consequently the city was full of Fu-T'ais, Chen-T'ais, Sieh-T'ais, and T'ais of every description, not to mention the lesser lights of Fus, Chous, and Hsiens.

Every hotel was crowded, and after hunting up and down the town Chin-Tai had only been able to get a place in an exceedingly dirty inn outside the east gate.

Every official in Ch'êng-Tu appeared to have sent me a soldier; for there was a whole army waiting on me. I kept half a dozen, and sent the rest away.

CHAPTER VIII.

A LOOP-CAST TOWARDS THE NORTHERN ALPS.

CH'ÊNG-TU TO SUNG-P'AN-T'ING.

Kindness of French Missionaries at Ch'êng-Tu—Arrangements with Mr. Mesny—Endeavour to take a House—Mystifications on the Subject—Pleasures of French Society—Proposed Excursion to the North—The Man-Tzŭ, or Barbarian Tribes—Preliminaries of Departure—Leave Ch'êng-Tu-Fu—Pi-Hsien—Engaging Official there—The Escort—Irrigated and Wooded Country—Halt at Kuan-Hsien—Scope of Excursion Extended—Frantic Curiosity of People, but no Incivility—Irrigation Works—Rope Suspension Bridge—Coal-beds—Yu-Chi Charming Inn—Yin-Hsiu-Wan, and Water-Mills—Hsin-Wên-P'ing—The '*Min* River'—Macaroni-making—Wên-Ch'uan-Hsien—First Man-Tzŭ Village—Pan-Ch'iao—Traces of War—Relentless Advance of Chinese—Miraculous Sand Ridge—Hsin-Pu-Kuan—Rapid Spread of the Potato—Excursion to Li-Fan-Fu in the Man-Tzŭ Hills—Scenes that recall the Elburz—Carefully-*made* Hill Road—The 'Sanga' of the Himalayas—Angling—Village of Ku-Ch'êng—Peat Streams—Musk Deer—Arrival at Li-Fan-Fu—The Margary Proclamation—Tales of Local Wonders—The Traveller fain would see—The Lions of Li-Fan-Fu—Search for a Man-Tzŭ Village—Man-Tzŭ here a term of Reproach—The I-Ran Tribes and their Language—Ku-Ch'êng—Local Wonders again—Return to Hsin-Pu-Kuan—Resume Valley of Hsi-Ho (or 'Min River')—Wên-Ch'êng—The Himalayan Haul-Bridge in Use—Polite Curiosity at Ma-Chou—Grandeur of the 'Nine Nails' Mountain—Precipitous Gorges—Wei-Mên-Kuan—Difficulties of the Road—The Sŭ-Mu, or White Barbarians—Alpine Scenery—Ta-Ting—Tieh-Chi-Ying—War with the Su-Mu—The Yak seen at last—Travellers' Disappointments—Glorious Mountain View (Mount Shih-Pan-Fang)—P'ing-Ting-Kuan—Expulsion of Man-Tzŭ—Maize Loaves—Wood Pigeons—Ngan-Hua-Kuan—Delicious Tea—Smoking in Ssŭ-Ch'uan—Country of the Si-Fan—Sung-P'an-T'ing.

May 10.—I sent Chin-Tai to the French missionaries with my card, to inquire at what time it would be convenient to them to receive me. But in the morning Monseigneur Desflêches paid me a visit. He made excuses for Monseigneur Pinchon, the bishop here, who, he said, was not very well. He welcomed

me warmly to the provincial capital, and the charm of his manner and his cordial reception soon made me forget where I was, and I could almost fancy myself nearer the Arc de Triomphe than the gate of the city of Ch'êng-Tu. He promised to help me to find a better place to stop in than that I now occupied, which was simply disgusting. The walls were hung with cobwebs of the blackest description. There was a bedstead with some carving at the top, the interstices in which were nearly filled with dust and dirt; bits of string hanging from the beams had nearly lost their original character from the coating of filth that had accumulated on them, and every gust of wind brought down a shower of dirt from the roof on to my head. Under the bed I dared not look. This unwieldy piece of furniture had probably stood there for years, and according to Chinese custom, whenever the room had been swept during that time, the sweepings had been left underneath it. To clean the room would have taken at least a couple of days, and to have half cleaned it would by stirring up the accumulated abominations only have made matters worse.

I visited the missionaries in the afternoon, who received me most kindly, and treated me to a collation of wine, cakes, and sweetmeats. It was a great treat to join again in reasonable conversation, and hear the sound of a language I understood. At these entertainments the missionaries always showed themselves true Frenchmen; the ease of their manner and the sparkle of their conversation were in strange contrast with the associations of the place. The time passed quickly, and I was much astonished when I rose to take my leave to find that I had been here nearly an hour and a half.

May 11.—When at Shanghai, I had been in communication with Mr. Mesny, an officer in the service

of the Chinese. He ultimately arranged to join me at Ch'êng-Tu, and subsequently travelled with me to Bhamo; and to his intimate knowledge of the language and ways of the people, I am mainly indebted for the friendly relations we always maintained with the Chinese officials. At present, he was still buried in the depths of the province of Kwei-Chou, although I was under the impression that he was well on his way to Ch'êng-Tu, and expected him every day.

Hearing nothing of him, however, I went away for a trip to Li-Fan-Fu, intending to return to the capital in ten days. But fresh circumstances arose, and eventually I extended my journey to Sung-P'an-T'ing, and Lung-An-Fu, and even then found myself back in Ch'êng-Tu before the arrival of Mr. Mesny.

For the present, I determined to take a house in Ch'êng-Tu for a month, if I could get one, for the rent of a house large enough for me was so small a sum, that it was quite worth while to take one for a few weeks, even if I had lived in it only for a couple of days.

During the day I received a visit from Monseigneur Pinchon, and afterwards sent Chin-Tai to see if he could find me a lodging inside the walls. He came back saying that there were twenty places. I was very cheerful at this unexpected plethora of accommodation, when Chin-Tai casually added, that only one of them would do, and that even that was not much of a place. I went off to see it, picking up on my way one of the missionaries' servants, who had told Chin-Tai that he knew of a house.

I looked at this one first, but it was in an hotel, and very small, so went on to the place that Chin-Tai had discovered. This was part of a private house, and would have suited me, but the missionaries' man said he knew of yet a third house, so I determined to

see it before deciding. I could not go there straight, because things were not ready; so I was taken to the shop of a Christian silk merchant, named Yeh, where I had a Chinese pipe and some tea; Yeh exhibited all his silks, which were very much more expensive than similar ones at Peking; he showed me the various colours that are made from the safflowers I had seen the people picking at Yang-Chia-Kai; these varied from a light pink, through a rich orange, to a deep red. He showed me some black silk, saying that it would make a very elegant thing in coats, if I thought of adopting the costume of the country. I assured him I had no intentions of abandoning my nationality. He was evidently much distressed, and looked from the silk to my figure, and back again to his fabric, evidently comparing the two mentally, not much to the credit of Savile Row.

Presently Chin-Tai returned, and we went off to see the house, which was suitable in every way, and was offered me for fifteen taels a month, with two hundred taels premium, to be returned to me on my vacating the premises.

May 12.—I gave Chin-Tai one hundred taels in silver, and a bill for one hundred taels, and sent him off to settle the question of the house. The banker could not let him have the money for a day or two, but as the silk merchant was willing to buy the bill, this caused no difficulty.

Chin-Tai returned presently, with a sorrowful countenance, and said that the house belonged to two brothers; that the elder had let the house without the consent of the younger; and that the latter, who was not fond of foreigners, refused to ratify the bargain. Chin-Tai added with a sigh, that, if I had not gone to see the house myself, matters could have

been arranged without the fact of my hated extraction coming to the knowledge of this inhospitable youth.

'*Tout vient à qui sait attendre*' ought to be translated in China, 'Nothing comes to people who cannot wait.'

Chin-Tai was again sent out to see what was to be done, with orders not to come back until matters were arranged. Quite late at night he returned with a favourable report; but there was still, he said, a good deal of talking to be accomplished, before any definite answer could be given.

The Tao-Tai of Ch'êng-Tu had heard of my difficulties, and presently sent me his card, with a polite message that he would get me a house if there was any further trouble; but whether this was merely an elegant formality, that he never supposed I should accept, and that meant nothing; or whether, under the impression that I was an important functionary, he thought that it was his duty to do all he could, I never exactly understood, for soon afterwards I learnt that the last house Chin-Tai had seen had been definitely taken, as I subsequently heard, by resorting to the mild subterfuge of informing the owner that I was an official from Peking.

May 13.—Even now I was not altogether without doubts, and as long as I was not fairly installed in my mansion, I could not quite believe that no unforeseen hitch would occur. My alarms were much allayed by the appearance of coolies early in the morning, who began taking away my things, and when I set off to breakfast with the missionaries, I began to think that I really might count on spending the next night under my own roof.

It was a delightful change from my own company

to that of some half-dozen lively Frenchmen. The mode of the meal, as they put it, was *moitié Chinoise, moitié Européenne*; one missionary was eating rice with chopsticks, and cracking jokes with a Chinese minister who also sat at table; another was washing down a Chinese dish with a glass of Tinto, which, contrary to usual custom, was taken in my honour. Excellent bread was on the table, for wherever a Frenchman is found there is sure to be good bread, and Chinese dishes succeeded others that might rather have come from the Boulevards than from a kitchen in Ch'êng-Tu. The meal passed very pleasantly, and afterwards I spent the greater part of the afternoon in the delights of hearing a familiar tongue.

When I took leave of the missionaries I went straight to my new house, which contained three rooms, and two dressing rooms, besides servants' quarters; it had a court in front, and was very clean for a Chinese house. It was supplied with three tables, half a dozen chairs, and two bedsteads, about the amount of fittings that make the difference in China between a furnished and an unfurnished house. I was now overwhelmed with a perfect inundation of what Chin-Tai was pleased to style policemen. Tiao-Chais they should be called, and were servants of the different officials in the city. All the magistrates in the place, the Fus and the Hsiens, seemed to send whole armies of their men, ostensibly as a compliment to me, and to take care of me; but in reality to keep a good eye on my movements, and still more to get some cash, whole mountains of which disappeared.

May 17.—I had made up my mind to visit a place called Li-Fan-Fu, which, from the accounts of the missionaries, was worth a visit. Amongst other things there was said to be an intermittent spring.

I was told that this place was inhabited by the Man-Tzŭ, or Barbarians, as the Chinese call them; and Monseigneur Pinchon told me that, amongst other pleasing theories, they were possessed of the belief that if they poisoned a rich man, his wealth would accrue to the poisoner; that, therefore, the hospitable custom prevailed amongst them of administering poison to rich or noble guests; that this poison took no effect for some time, but that in the course of two or three months it produced a disease akin to dysentery, ending in certain death.

Monseigneur Pinchon advised me to take my food from Ch'êng-Tu, and to avoid the temptations of feasting as a guest of this singular people. This superstition is almost an exact parallel to one related by Polo as in vogue amongst a tribe in Western Yün-Nan, *vide* Yule's 'Marco Polo,' 2nd ed. vol. ii. p. 64. It may be doubted, however, whether much more of the custom remains than the tradition.

There are altogether eighteen of the Barbarian tribes spreading over the country from Yün-Nan to the extreme north of Ssŭ-Ch'uan. Each tribe has its king—one of them a queen—and they live almost entirely by agriculture and cattle-keeping. The king usually derives a considerable revenue from his lands, and every family in his kingdom has to send one man for six months to work on his estate. In other cases he receives an annual amount of eggs, flour, or wheat from each household. He has absolute power over all his land, assigns certain portions of it to certain families, and, if they displease him, or he has any other reason for doing so, he displaces them at once, and puts others in their stead, all the houses and farm-buildings passing to the new comer.

One of these royalties, that of Mou-Pin, was at this time distracted by disturbances, a civil war, bandits, robbers, soldiers, and evils of every kind. The king had died not long previously, leaving a wife with three daughters, and a sister-in-law, who set herself up as the protector of an illegitimate infant son. There was at once a disputed succession, for by the law a female could not sit on the throne. The sister-in-law and the wife both wanted the ruling power. The sister-in-law succeeded in stealing the seal of State. She obtained some boy, who was permitted to go and pay his respects to the widow as sovereign, and who, while making his obeisance, managed to snatch the seal and escape to the sister-in-law.

A war then broke out, some people taking part with the queen widow, and others with the sister-in-law. As usual in such cases all the bad characters flocked to the place to feed on the booty; both the queen widow and the sister-in-law were obliged to take refuge in Ch'êng-Tu, and now the whole kingdom was given over to pillage, and the villanies always accompanying a civil war.

I sent Chin-Tai to the Tao-Tai, to inform him of my intended tour. He assured me that there was no such place as Li-Fan-Fu; but that there was a Chinese military station named Sung-P'an-T'ing, and that that must be the place that I wished to visit. He said he would send four Tinc-Chais with me, as it would not be proper for me to travel with less.

The banker came in in the evening, and brought me 150 taels of silver, chopped up by some neighbouring blacksmith into little pieces suitable for the small payments.

Before leaving Ch'êng-Tu, as it would be necessary for me to have intercourse with the officials on

the way, Chin-Tai was ordered to buy a card-case for my Chinese visiting-cards, an affair of about the size and appearance of a small portfolio. Cards are sent, some hours before making a call in China, by a servant, to inform the people that they may expect a visit at such and such an hour, and to prepare them for the momentous event. People also, as in Europe, send their cards as a civility one to another without visiting.

The market prices at Ch'êng-Tu were much the same as at Ch'ung-Ch'ing. Beef sixty cash a catty; eggs six cash each; fowls ninety to one hundred cash a catty; wheaten flour forty, and fish fifty to eighty, for, as in Polo's time, still 'they catch a great quantity of fish.'

Twenty cash was equivalent to a little less than a penny, and a catty is equal to a pound and a third avoirdupois.

May 18.—As I thought I should only be away for a few days I took no more than eight baggage coolies, beside the chair coolies, and another pony. These were engaged only for the journey to Kuan-Hsien, for beyond that place the country is so mountainous that coolies accustomed to the plains will not or are not able to work in it.

On turning out in the morning I found a good many of my old coolies, and the same coolie-master. We sortied through the north-west gate of the city, near which there is a good deal of open space, and many gardens with nice trees, willow chiefly, and, of course, bamboos.

On leaving the gate a suburb extends about two thirds of a mile beyond, but it has no depth, and is little more than a line of houses on both sides of the road, behind which gardens and fields can be seen.

The yellow corn was waving in the breeze, the harvest was in full progress, and the rice-planting was still going on. There was less rice on this side of the city, more wheat and tobacco, and no opium whatever that I could see. The red clay of the soil had entirely disappeared, and in its place there was a kind of grey clayey sand, the city of Ch'êng-Tu having apparently been built on the extreme edge of the red clay.

There was not nearly so much water on the land as there was on the south of the city, although at each side of the road, which was not paved, there was a considerable stream; and I now saw no more of the pumping mills that had become so familiar.

There were more trees of all kinds; long rows were planted on the divisions between the fields and on the sides of the road, and the appearance of the country put me somewhat in mind of the neighbourhood of Peking.

I proceeded in great state with my four satellites, who shouted to everyone they met to get out of the way. Perhaps a poor man would come staggering along with an enormous load on a wheelbarrow, just where the track for these machines was very narrow, but where there was plenty of room for me at the side. Nothing, however, would satisfy my gentlemen, unless he cleared right out of the course; and once when one of these unfortunates was not quick enough, they upset the wheelbarrow into the brook at the side of the road. I remonstrated with them, but it had no effect whatever, as they had made up their minds to maintain their own dignity, however little I might care about mine.

Whenever I got on and off my pony, as much fuss was made about me as about a jockey mounting for

the Derby: one man to each stirrup, another to the pony's head, a fourth to his tail, and the Ma-Fu to give me a lift, as if the animal was about eighteen instead of eleven hands high.

The road was very lively with many people carrying cocoons of silk, and many travellers riding, the latter with huge stirrups made of wood, into which they often thrust their heels instead of their toes.

I halted for the night at Pi-Hsien, where there was a large inn, which appeared to be a kind of barrack, for it was full of soldiers.

When first I came in I thought it a delightful place; the room was open in front to a good-sized yard, beyond which was a covered square, with great gates opening into a further court, and I imagined that by shutting the gates I should be delightfully cool and quiet.

Four little rooms were entered directly from the large room, and in each of these there were about six soldiers, who behaved themselves very well.

It was not long, however, before it became necessary to open the gates, for the people of the town would very soon have burst them down. On they came, that curious crowd: first one barrier was passed, then another; little by little the jabbering mob approached the door; soon they were in the room, and like a flood threatened to carry me away right through the opposite wall. At length, sorry as I was to disappoint their legitimate curiosity, it became necessary to turn the soldiers out of one of the small rooms, into which I retreated.

It was a filthy place, and none the cleaner for having been occupied by the braves, who seemed chiefly to have amused themselves by spitting about all over it; and as I sat imprisoned, as if to mock me,

a huge label that still stuck to my writing box, 'Grand Hôtel de Thoune à Thoune,' stared me in the face, and I could hardly help yearning, if not for the flesh-pots, at least for some of the comforts of civilisation.

The Hsien was at Ch'êng-Tu assisting to inaugurate the new governor-general, but his son called on me, and afterwards sent me a present of a couple of fowls, for which I had of course to give as much money to the man who brought them as would have paid for these muscular birds over and over again.

Soon afterwards I learnt that the Hsien himself had posted back from the capital on purpose to look after me; and he called on me after dinner, a man with a frank open face, very unlike most Chinese. He offered me everything he possessed, hoped I would stop a day, and he would take me about, and show me what there was to see, and said that if I came back this way he would put me up in his yamen. I thanked him, but said I could not stop just now, but hoped to see him again on my return.

Any official would of course go through the form of offering as much as this, but his face gave such a charm to all he said that I really think he meant it.

Before leaving he asked me all about my proposed expedition, and like the Tao-Tai of Ch'êng-Tu, assured me that in speaking of Li-Fan-Fu I must mean Sung-P'an-T'ing; so certain was he of this, that he took the trouble to write out an itinerary for me of the road to Sung-P'an-T'ing and Lung-An-Fu.

After he had gone, I turned into bed, and, notwithstanding the dirt that fell on my head from the matting above, where a healthy family of rats were steeple-chasing all night, I slept soundly.

May 19.—The Hsien gave me additional presents

of candied fruits, which were really excellent, and he insisted on sending me an escort of twenty soldiers. After some remonstrance I succeeded in reducing to ten the number of these useless but exceedingly picturesque braves.

Over the ordinary dress they wore a loose red tunic without sleeves; four of them were armed with spears terminating in an arrangement like Neptune's trident; and four others with weapons ending in short square swords. The heads of all the poles were adorned with large rosettes of blue and red with ends hanging down. The other two men bore flags, one in front and one behind.

The Hsien also sent his steward, a functionary of much importance. This man rode a pony, and gave me a good deal of assistance, praise that I can hardly lavish on the remainder of the procession, who were about as useful as the men in armour in a lord mayor's show.

When the soldiers left me they formed line to the left, and gave what I took to be a general salute; this they performed in divers and sundry manners, all laughing heartily.

This glorification of course was not achieved without the expenditure of a considerable sum of money; but as everybody seemed to enjoy the thing so thoroughly, it would, I felt, have been cruel to grudge them the pleasure.

We marched over the same beautiful rich fertile plain; and after about an hour the mountains appeared through the haze.

The whole country is a perfect network of canals and watercourses; and as the plain here begins rising rapidly (at least ten feet per mile), the streams are all very swift. The number of trees everywhere is enor-

mous; the sides of the road are bordered with a small kind of beech, and also willows; there are often rows of trees between the fields, and clusters round the houses. Here is a line of fruit trees, oranges or apricots; there a temple enclosed by a wall with a number of fine yews; and in every direction the view is bounded by trees.

The beeches are used only for firewood, and for the manufacture of charcoal, which, as well as coke, is made in great quantities at Kuan-Hsien; and vast numbers of coolies are seen on the road carrying these in the usual way, or wheeling them in barrows.

There was no lack of tea-houses by the roadside, and I breakfasted in one close to the river, which, here sixty yards wide, and running swiftly over a pebbly bottom, looked a glorious place for throwing a fly.

A little higher up it was crossed by a neat trestle bridge in nine spans. The framework for the usual roof had just been put up over the roadway, and people were at work completing it.

At about twenty miles from Pi-Hsien the road passes through the heavy gates of a massive gateway, on which is built one of the three-storied buildings invariably erected over the gateways of the walled cities. There are no walls on either side, the gateway standing by itself in useless and solitary grandeur. I was unable to learn anything of the history of this building; but it certainly would seem as if in former times the walls of Kuan-Hsien extended to this point.

The road from here to Kuan-Hsien passes through a suburb, and underneath six very elegant triumphal arches, elaborately ornamented with carvings in relief, the work of the numerous stonemasons that are seen

in this suburb engaged in chipping away at a soft grey sandstone.

The Hsien of Kuan-Hsien, as soon as he heard of my arrival, sent me more fowls, and sweetmeats in such quantities that it would have puzzled even a Russian to dispose of them; and to increase my dignity he lent me a number of red cushions from his yamen.

May 20.—I was obliged to wait a day at Kuan-Hsien as fresh coolies were to be hired, and reflecting on what the Hsien at Pi-Hsien had said, I began to think it would be worth while to extend my trip to Sung-P'an-T'ing. The trip was sure to be an interesting one; no European, not even the missionaries, had ever been to Sung-P'an-T'ing, and it was almost on the borders of the Koko-Nor district. I had expected nothing but opposition from the Chinese officials, but instead they were actually putting opportunities in my way.

I did not take long to make up my mind; and the only obstacle remaining was the want of money. I had left Ch'êng-Tu with a supply ample for the short journey to Li-Fan-Fu, but not enough to take me to Sung-P'an-T'ing. I therefore first sent to the Hsien, to ask him if he could and would buy one of my one hundred tael bills. He returned me a polite message to say that he had not that amount by him, and could not accommodate me.

But I had now made up my mind to go to Sung-P'an-T'ing; so I determined to send Chung-Erh back to Ch'êng-Tu to get the money; arranging for him to meet me again at Hsin-P'u-Kuan, where the road to Li-Fan-Fu turns off from the military road to Sung-P'an-T'ing.

I was making inquiries here about the intermittent

spring at Li-Fan-Fu, of which of course no one knew anything; but the hotel-master, anxious to gratify my taste for the marvellous, said that there was a very remarkable one at a temple just outside the city. When I arrived there, there was of course no spring; but I was nevertheless well repaid for the trouble of coming here, for the temple was at an exceedingly lovely spot.

It was a large place, surrounded by a wall, and its grounds were in perfect order, and well cared for; it hung over the water, which was dashing and foaming below, more a torrent than a river, but down which a few rafts managed to find a somewhat perilous passage.

To the north a fine valley, well cultivated and thickly wooded, ran up amongst hills also well-wooded, the buttresses of fine mountains behind, which plunged their tops into the clouds; while on the other side lay spread out, in all the richness of its verdure, the fertile plain of Ch'êng-Tu.

A well dressed priest, with a tall hat, showed me round, and gave me some tea.

The people of Kuan-Hsien do not enjoy a high reputation, and I found no reason to make my opinion of them an exception to the general rule. I was followed about by a gaping crowd, who exhibited more than the usual amount of the frantic curiosity of the Chinese people, who, notwithstanding their outrageous inquisitiveness, seem yet utterly devoid of the power of observation. I have looked at the faces of some thousands, and in scarcely one have I seen the smallest appearance of observing power. Where the eyelid ends, the forehead begins, leaving no room for the organs of this faculty. After I had returned from my excursion, my people managed to keep the court-yard clear; but in the door of it there was a little

open latticework, and hour after hour it was blocked by heads, whose owners all that time can have seen nothing foreign save a bath-towel hung out in the sun to dry.

No one who has not gone through this process of being continually stared at, can thoroughly realise what it is; sometimes after arrival at an inn, when the fearful hubbub, which usually lasts about an hour, has somewhat subsided, and when at last the court-yard has been cleared, and the traveller fondly hopes the reign of peace is about to commence, he suddenly becomes aware of a whispering carried on somewhere near him,—a conversation carried on in a whisper is always disagreeable, but under these circumstances it is peculiarily irritating,—he lays down his pen, and listens, and the sound of a scraping noise outside the wall is heard; presently a finger is cautiously thrust through the paper that covers a little bit of window which he fancied far beyond the reach of escalade, and that well-known eye appears. He suddenly looks up, the eye disappears, a thud is heard on the ground outside, followed by the rumbling sound of some thirty or forty feet, as their owners scamper off, ashamed of having been found out.

Writing is recommenced, and the traveller is soon again absorbed in his work, when presently a scratching and scraping, accompanied by the same horrid whispering, discovers some one picking away the plaster of a lath and plaster partition. If one hole is covered up, another is made somewhere else, until at length even if people should appear underneath the floor it would not cause the least surprise.

May 21.—We still had our old coolie-master, who had hired the men necessary: baggage coolies, now reduced to six; eight chair-coolies and a pony with

a Ma-Fu for myself, and two chairs and a pony for the servants.

Besides their reputation for turbulence, the people of Kuan-Hsien are said to be miserably poor; the latter they certainly are, for Chin-Tai was unable to change his silver. I did not find their turbulence exhibit itself in any other way than excessive curiosity, which was so great that not only were the foreigner, the foreign dog, and foreign clothes, objects of intense interest, but the wonder with which these were regarded was extended even to the servants, and a crowd of people, who apparently thought that a Chinaman who could perform the astounding feat of entering the service of a foreigner must bear in his body some outward and visible sign of the fact, followed Chin-Tai when he walked about the streets. Notwithstanding this insatiable inquisitiveness, I found them quiet enough, and no one said an uncivil word.

Leaving the west gate of the city the road ascended the left bank of the river, here about two hundred and fifty yards broad, a rushing torrent of beautiful clear water. This river debouches from the hills at Kuan-Hsien, where the valley is a mile wide; and immediately below this, the ingenious contrivances commence for dividing the river, and directing the numerous branches into the desired channels.

The works are most simple; large boulders, about the size of a man's head, are collected and put into long cylindrical baskets of very open bamboo network; these baskets are laid nearly horizontally, and thus the bund is formed. The streams into which the river is in this manner split up, irrigate the Ch'êng-Tu plain, and lower down again unite to form the Min River of geographers.

A little above Kuan-Hsien, there is a suspension-

bridge across the river. Six ropes, one above the other, are stretched very tightly, and connected by vertical battens of wood laced in and out. Another similar set of ropes is at the other side of the roadway, which is laid across these, and follows the curve of the ropes.

There are three or four spans with stone piers.

On account of my inquiries about the intermittent spring at Li-Fan-Fu, my people had now an idea that I wanted to see every drop of water that could be found trickling anywhere; and just outside the city, Chin-Tai said there was a remarkable stream at a temple. I visited the temple; but the water was merely a small brook that came down from the hills behind, and was conducted through the mouth of a serpent carved in stone. The temple was, however, well worth a visit; very large and beautifully kept, a very fine flight of stone steps in perfect preservation, where there was not a blade of grass between the flags, led through one or two low buildings, separated by courts paved with a very smooth concrete.

The gilding and paint on the decorations were quite fresh. There was everywhere a great deal of elaborate carving; carved figures on the roofs, and on every pinnacle; even the screens in front of the doors were ornamented at the top with some tracery; everything was in good order, and all the interstices kept clean and free from dust.

Altogether, in its cleanliness, it was very unlike anything Chinese.

In one place there was a tank with rockwork and beautiful ferns, where half a dozen tortoises were disporting themselves in their usual clumsy fashion.

A very civil priest offered me tea; but as I had a long journey before me I declined his invitation to remain.

The road following the river, at once plunged into the mountains, which rose about 1,200 or 1,500 feet. The first were of sandstone, and in this a couple of seams of coal, though only a few feet thick, gave plenty of occupation to a considerable population. The beds were here inclined 45°, and the strata ran up in a north-east direction, at right angles to the valley; these formations soon gave way to the inevitable limestone, here exceedingly rich; and large numbers of lime-kilns, and many coolies laden with lime, attested its value.

After following the river about eight miles, we turned to the right up a stream, where the vertical strata were well exhibited in some small cliffs, the strike being nearly north and south. The sides of the hills were almost too steep for cultivation, of which there was very little; but grass, flowers, shrubs, and trees were growing luxuriantly, and the richness of the verdure was charming.

About ten miles brought us to the village of Yu-Ch'i, where a covered bridge of wood on stone piers took us across the stream. The inn was remarkably clean, the people quiet and civil, and I sat writing with the doors open, no one attempting to intrude. At the back a window looked on to a fine steep hill; and some sweet-smelling blossoms in the courtyard made me ask myself whether I could really be in China.

We left this peaceful little place; and two miles and a half up the side of a ravine brought us to a small temple, 2,000 feet above Yu-Ch'i, perched on a saddle connecting two mountains which rose on either hand about 1,000 feet above it. Here I sat down, and pondered over the sad state of my nearly worn-out boots, while I waited for Chin-Tai, and watched the people passing by.

This road was much traversed. We met great numbers of coolies carrying timber on their backs; the logs were generally about eight feet long by ten inches square. Some were even larger, though these would weigh at least 200 lbs. There was evidently a great trade in timber, for at all the villages on the river there were large stacks.

Numbers of coolies were carrying roots of many descriptions, mostly medicines, and great numbers with baskets of the young shoots of the bamboo, which are cooked and eaten as a vegetable.

An easier road took us down another valley back to the river, and a descent of 1,450 feet brought us to the village of Yin-Hsiu-Wan, a very quiet little place with not enough inhabitants to crowd the inn; this could hardly be considered clean, but was very quiet. The window of my room, which for once in a way was in a position suitable for seeing out of, was right over the river; and, looking across a steep and wooded bank, I could see a fine mountain on the opposite side. The roar of the water made pleasant music in the evening air, and after the bustle and turmoil of the towns below, the peace and quiet of the mountain village was very enjoyable.

During the day I saw the first water-mill I had seen in China. I had begun to think that water-mills, like pumps, were unknown; but afterwards I found them at nearly every village in the mountains.

May 22.—All day we followed up the river by a very fair path, in which there was a good deal of up and down. The mountains here rise about three thousand feet; their sides are very steep, in places almost precipitous, and here and there there are cliffs, sometimes four hundred or five hundred feet high; but where they are not absolutely vertical, a luxuriant

vegetation of grass, brambles, beautiful flowering creepers, jasmines, and ferns gets a hold in the crevices of the rocks. Small ashes, beeches, and other trees grow in profusion ; and the mountains are clothed in green to their very summits. Down at the bottom, if the valley opens out and leaves a little level ground, there is sometimes a patch of cultivation, and growing amongst the big rocks which lie tumbled about, there are quantities of a kind of barberry, just now in blossom, with a scent like wild thyme. Round every little village are fine clumps of trees, walnuts, peaches, apricots, and large numbers of Pi-Pa (*Eriobotrya Japonica* or *loquot*), the last now bearing fruit which, although the people here seemed very fond of it, appeared to me to have no taste whatever.

At every two or three miles ropes are stretched across the river ; the people make a sort of raft of two logs of wood, a line from this runs on the rope, and they cross on the raft ; rather an unpleasant operation in this foaming torrent, that falls one thousand feet before it reaches Kuan-Hsien, a distance that, taking all the windings into account, cannot be more than fifty miles.

I breakfasted at the little hamlet of Hsin-Wên-P'ing, built on exactly the same model as all the other mountain villages, with one inn, at which no one appeared to stop. It had only just been built, and the fresh clean wood panels of the wall and boards of the ceiling were quite a pleasure. The people treated me with the greatest civility, even taking the trouble as we passed the houses to keep their dogs from barking at mine. Some of them would come in and have a quiet talk now and then, or show me their curiosities in return for a similar exhibition on my part. Here they told me there were deer and wild

boars in the mountains; that some of the latter were found weighing three hundred catties (four hundred pounds); and, as a proof, brought me a young one about a foot long which was striped longitudinally.

May 23.—Notwithstanding the fresh clean panels of the walls, which I had so enthusiastically admired on my arrival, I was horribly eaten of insects during the night, a process to which by this time I was tolerably hardened.

Directly we started we plunged into a wild gorge, the mountain sides running down very precipitously to the river which map-makers call the Min; the people here call it the Hsin [qu. Hsi-Ho?], when they have any name for it at all, which generally they have not.

The tops of the mountains were hidden in rain clouds, wreaths of mist hung about the lower slopes, and a steady rain did not tend to enliven the scene, or render the taking of notes more easy or more agreeable.

The road ran close to the edge of the water, the path being cut out of the rock, in many places propped up from underneath, or cut into steep and irregular steps which the rain made very slippery. The place was very desolate, and there was not a great deal of traffic, although every now and then we passed a good many coolies carrying loads of wood and roots; and at long intervals a small string of mules.

Early in the day my pony dropped a shoe, and I turned into a tea-house while the farrier was at work. Here a man was making a kind of macaroni, and I watched the process with much interest. He made a kind of very heavy dough of wheaten flour, with a little soda; the kneading process was most complicated; at times, as his unaided strength was not sufficient, he made use of a lever, like a long and very stout ruler. His table stood against the wall, in which

there was a hole for one end of his lever, and he pressed on the other end with all his weight. The dough was rolled out over and over again, until at last he had a very thin, long-shaped sheet of stuff to his satisfaction; this was then cut up into strips like tape, and the process was complete. These strips are boiled and eaten hot with some chopped chillies. Like most Chinese things it has very little flavour.

As Wên-Ch'uan-Hsien is approached the valley opens out, the sides of the hills are less steep, and there is some cultivation below. This town is a miserable place, and has a poverty-stricken air. The missionaries warned me to be very careful here; they advised me to shut myself up in my chair and draw down all the blinds, for, as they put it, the inhabitants were very 'mauvais'; but it seemed to me that, however vicious their inclinations might be, there were not enough people to put them into practice. I saw scarcely anyone about, andt he streets would have been absolutely deserted but for a few old women, who seemed ashamed of themselves for being there. The town is only about three hundred yards across, and we found a filthy inn in a wretched suburb on the northern side.

Here the Kuan-Hsien people left us, and the Hsien of Wên-Ch'uan sent his card, with a head-man and four Tinc-Chais. He also sent a present of fowls, ducks, and some tea pressed into an annular cake. The fowls and ducks were very welcome, for in this wretched town it was absolutely impossible to get anything, and without them I should have gone dinnerless.

I had been told that I could get yak beef here, as the mountaineers were said to keep yaks in a domestic state, and kill them for beef; this, however,

was a pure fable, invented to put me in a good humour. The tea was the celebrated tea of Pu-Erh ; I was not at this time aware of its excellence, or I should have more fully appreciated the liberality of the donor.

Soon after starting we saw the first Man-Tzŭ village on the top of the mountains. I was walking ahead with two of the Tinc-Chais, and, pointing to the village, asked if it was not one of the Man-Tzŭ. 'No,' replied the man,' 'it's a village.' After which brilliant effort on his part the conversation dropped. The Man-Tzŭ build their villages in quite a different style to the Chinese ; the houses are of stone, and the lower part is like a fort, with a few narrow windows like loopholes ; there is a flat roof, and on part of this a kind of shed is erected also flat-roofed, and open to the front. There is a high tower in each village. These are usually square ; but I once saw an octagonal one. I never succeeded in getting a very satisfactory explanation of these towers ; some people told me that the possession of one was a privilege enjoyed by the head-man ; but as I almost immediately afterwards saw three or four in the same village, this did not seem as if it were altogether to be relied on.

May 24.—The inn at Pan-Ch'iao, though small and dirty, was quiet, but the righteous soul of Chin-Tai was sorely vexed at the robbery of a coat by one of the lodgers. But it was not so much the loss of his coat that grieved him, as the injustice that permitted an inn to be kept by two women so wretched that he could not extract from them the value of the stolen article.

With much difficulty I tore him away from the scene of this disaster, and leaving Pan-Ch'iao we continued our journey. The river still wound about in a narrow gorge, and soon after starting the clouds

lifted for a minute from the head of a fine snowy mountain. About two and a half miles from Pan-Ch'iao, the valley on our side opened out, and there was a little grassy plain, where a stream running down from the east joined the river. Here, hidden amongst the thick foliage of walnut trees, there was a little village, whose inhabitants cultivated the patch of level ground. It was a pretty place. There were a few apricot and peach trees by the roadside, and a couple of brilliant yellow birds were flying about amongst the branches.

Perched like an eagle's eyrie on the tops of the almost inaccessible hills, or like wild birds' nests, on the faces of perpendicular cliffs, there were many villages of the Man-Tzŭ; and down below, on the banks of the smiling river, there were the blackened ruins of many another once peaceful hamlet.

In one place, close to the ruins of some Man-Tzŭ buildings, that I could plainly see had been burnt not very long ago, there was a new and flourishing Chinese village, where the Chinese, having ousted the aborigines, had established themselves. A little further on there was a cluster of inhabited houses, built in the Man-Tzŭ style close down to the river, that had formerly been occupied by Man-Tzŭ, but had now been taken possession of by Chinese. I noticed that the Chinese, in one or two very new villages, were adopting in part the Man-Tzŭ style; but in these the high tower was always wanting, and the difference in the appearance of the new semi Man-Tzŭ villages and of the regular Man-Tzŭ buildings was most apparent.

The relentless advance of the Chinese was thus presented to the eye in a very striking manner; every village had its tale of battle, murder, or sudden attack by the barbarians on the peaceable Chinese. In

imagination it was easy to fill the picture with living figures. I could in fancy hear the clash of arms, or see the flight of the Man-Tzŭ from their ruthless enemy, who left nothing but the smoking ruins of some once quiet hamlet to bear witness to the cruel tragedy.

The story as told me was always the same. How the Chinese came peaceably up the valleys, and were received by the inhabitants with every show of welcome; how unprovoked and unexpected attack was made on the new comers, who, at first fighting only for existence, ultimately secured the victory, and established themselves in the place of their treacherous foes. The Chinese, as at each successive village they narrated with never-varying details the events of every battle, dwelt with delight on the valour of their race, and the cowardly conduct of the barbarians, and never thought it possible that I should wonder what account these same barbarians would render, should they have the opportunity of telling their tale.

But the irrevocable law of nature must have its way; the better race must gradually supplant the inferior one; the Chinese will continue their advance, stopped only where the climate aids the soil in its refusal to produce even to these industrious agriculturists the fruits of the earth in due season.

But these mountains, whose heads are crowned with dazzling snow, into whose inmost recesses man has never penetrated, and whose rugged sides and mighty precipices must inspire awe in the most unpoetic soul, have not been without their influence on the minds of the inhabitants. Not only the shout of battle, but the miracle wrought by some Buddhist saint, the mystery attendant on some freak of nature, and even the gentle song of love, finds its place in the

legends that cling to the sides of these romantic valleys.

Leaving behind us the melancholy records of a fast dying race, we crossed a little ridge, and my attention was called to a spot surrounded with all the halo of the miraculous.

On our left was a long ridge of loose sand, that fancy might conjure into the semblance of a gigantic snake; and hidden in its mysterious depths some marvellous creature even now resides. And with awe the tale was told me, how no effort of man has ever succeeded in clearing away that ridge of sand; for even if by dint of desperate labour during the day a portion is removed by nightfall, when the labourer returns to his work on the morrow, lo! all is as it was, and everything must be commenced afresh.

The fable has its origin in truth. No doubt there is a backbone of rock to this ridge of sand, and the wind coming out of the valley causes the drift, that even if cleared away would of course soon again collect.

There was yet something more wonderful about this place, and Chin-Tai told me an interminable story about a Fu, five dragons, and five swords; but it was very long, and he became so interested in it as to give it me more in Chinese than English, by which the moral, if there was one, is lost to posterity for ever. He, however, impressed upon me very strongly the fact that it was a miracle, and that as it was told him by some one who lived here it must be *true*.

Hsin-P'u-Kuan boasts a wall and gate, and is presided over by an official called a T'ing. He asked me to stop here all day, and placed his house at my disposal, an offer that he did not expect me to accept. He sent me the usual unromantic fowl, some potatoes

which were very acceptable, and a piece of pork, which my servants gladly disposed of for me; for nothing short of absolute starvation would have induced me to touch the flesh of a Chinese pig, a peculiarity that afterwards obtained for me the title of a foreign Mahometan.

The potato is despised by the Chinese as food only fit for pigs and foreigners, but, introduced into the mountainous regions by the missionaries not much more than fifty years ago, the valuable properties of this useful root have already made themselves appreciated, and steadily, but surely, gaining ground, notwithstanding the contempt of the Chinese, it is destined at no distant day to take its place amongst the agricultural products of China. In all the mountain regions in Western China and Tibet potatoes are found, and as far as Ta-Li-Fu I was never without them during the whole of my journey.

Marching out of Hsin-P'u-Kuan the river was immediately crossed by one of the rope suspension bridges, that had by this time become familiar. The roadway on these follows the curve of the ropes, and at the two ends is rather steep. The bridges themselves sway about a good deal, especially if there happens to be any wind, and walking on them is something like walking on the deck of a rolling ship.

The volume of the river is here swelled by the tributary from Li-Fan-Fu; this is passed by a similar bridge, and leaving the main road to Sung-P'an-T'ing, the road to Li-Fan-Fu ascends the right bank of the tributary stream.

The scenery now changed entirely. At the bottom of the valley there was here and there a little flat ground, where fields of barley were divided by loose

stone walls, the mountains rising up behind almost precipitously. With the exception of a few scanty blades of grass, these were perfectly bare, and standing like a long wall, almost unbroken even by a gully, presented a remarkable contrast to the magnificent verdure we had left behind.

In one or two places the Man-Tzŭ villages were now inhabited by Chinese; and up on the tops of the mountains, when the clouds lifted, the present dwelling places of these aborigines could be seen. Some of them put me much in mind of many a Persian hamlet lying hidden in the valleys of the great Elburz; one in particular, close down by the stream, half hidden amongst trees, with a little patch of cultivation round it, and with the bare and rugged mountain rising like a wall behind, needed only a few tall, straight poplars to complete the likeness, and almost made me think I was nearer to the Atrek than to the Yang-Tzŭ.

In places the valley narrowed, and the hills running sheer down to the water, the road was supported from below, or rested upon horizontal stakes driven into the face of the rock.

The road was everywhere in an excellent state of repair; great care was evidently bestowed upon it, and it must have cost much money and labour to keep it up. The Chinese are not as a rule in the habit of repairing roads; but in a case of this kind a road left to itself would very soon cease to exist. In one place it had been found impossible to avoid a short tunnel, and when it had been necessary to cut steps in the rock, these were very regular, and carefully made.

There were a great many caves and caverns in the sides of the hill, some in very inaccessible positions, but I could get no information about them.

A little less than nine miles from Hsin-P'u-Kuan there is a bridge precisely similar in construction to the Sanga bridges of India, and to many others that subsequently became familiar to me in the mountainous regions between Tibet and Western China.

Seeing a very old man fishing with a rod and line, we purchased a couple of fish, which though not trout turned out delicious. I never found a specimen of the salmon tribe in Western China or Tibet; there are plenty of salmon in Japan, and in the Amur, but I have never heard of their being found in any river further south. I used always to examine the fish, but I never detected the smallest indication of the second back fin, which characterises the salmonidæ.

I now turned my attention to the rod and line, and found that the old gentleman used a reel as we do in Europe; but instead of a heavy brass affair he had a light octagonal wooden framework on which the line was wound; it had the advantage of a very large diameter, so that one turn wound up very much more than would be reeled up by one turn of our elaborate and costly machines.

The village of Ku-Ch'êng, where we stopped, was so small that it really hardly deserved a name, and the inn was a quaint and dirty place. One large room, whose walls were black with age and smoke, opened from the street. It was not provided with a window, and at the back there was a sort of cupboard, which did duty for a guest room or state apartment, and here, where in the brightest day the light of heaven never penetrated, I took up my abode. When the night closed in, the large room beyond was lighted by a fire of wood, and one or two oil lamps, whose fitful glimmering was just sufficient to cast a lurid glare on the faces of the strange

figures seated round, smoking their long pipes and discussing the events of the day. One by one they put away their pipes, the conversation gradually dropped, and soon all were wrapped up in their blankets, and sound asleep.

May 25.—We continued our march up the desolate valley, where the cultivation on the little level patches of ground close to the water's edge only served as a foil to set off the bare and precipitous mountain sides. The streams that came down from these ran through deep and gloomy gorges, tumbling in little cascades between almost vertical walls of rock; many of them were of a brown colour, so like the peat streams of Scotland that I almost think there must be fields of peat in the unknown mass of mountains to the south. There was scarcely any traffic on the road, the villages were few and very small, and half hidden in walnut and willow trees, with a few apricots and firs.

We halted at a very little place for breakfast, where the people had a young bear they had brought down from the mountains; they told me that bears were not very numerous, and that they were found in the snowfields about twenty miles distant. I asked if there were any white bears, for I had been told that in some mountains to the west of Ch'êng-Tu there were white carnivorous bears; but the people said they had never heard of any. The musk deer is found in this neighbourhood, and I was offered here the first musk bag that I had seen.

Not far from here there was a place with an unusual aspect. It was like a large stockade, the walls of loose stones instead of wood, in which there were some long low buildings, where only a few people stood about. This was a barrack, and in the

fighting time there had been a large garrison here; now it looked miserable and deserted, and was a post for twenty men.

About a mile before reaching Li-Fan-Fu the new pagoda that was built in 1876 is a prominent object. Soon afterwards a very short suburb is gained, and the wall of the city, which is in a somewhat ruinous condition, is passed by the eastern gate.

Some people joined our party here. They told Chin-Tai that the governor-general of Ssŭ-Ch'uan had sent them to warn all officials on the road that I was coming, that I was to be treated with proper respect, and generally taken care of. One of them put down a parcel in the room where the servants pack together, and the eyes of the inquisitive Chin-Tai alighting on it he brought it to me. It was the Margary proclamation.

The people of Ch'êng-Tu evidently thought that I was a consular officer, and that my mission was to see if this proclamation was posted. This was very natural, for the idea of any man travelling in discomfort, when he could stop at home in ease, is one that it is simply impossible for a Chinese mind to comprehend. Further, I came to Ch'ung-Ch'ing with Baber, a recognised consular officer; and finally it was one of the stipulations of the Chi-Fu Convention that these officers should travel about from place to place to see that the proclamation was posted.

The literati class is the one most esteemed in China, and partly to gain the credit of belonging to it, and partly to explain my otherwise incomprehensible habits of looking at everything, and asking what appeared to the Chinese innumerable insane questions, I always professed to be one of the literati class, went about openly with a note book in my

hand, and declared that I was going to write a book. No protestations, however, on my part were of the least avail; even my servants, accustomed as they had been all their lives to the eccentricities of Europeans, never believed that I was simply a private individual, and probably never carried out my instructions to say so—not that it would have in the least availed, for had they sworn it most solemnly and continuously they would certainly not have been believed. Duplicity is in the nature of the Chinese, and being so *rusés* themselves, they naturally attribute sinister or at least hidden designs to others. I was thus surrounded with all the majesty and pomp of a high official, and however unpleasant might be the feeling that I was sailing under false colours, I could only console myself with the reflection that it materially added to my comfort, if not to my safety.

The Margary proclamation had been posted once already on the occasion of the visit of one of the French missionaries, who had been here not a very long time previously. The missionaries always dress in Chinese clothes, wear an artificial plait, conceal their European eyes with spectacles, and pass well enough for Chinamen without attracting much notice; but this one having a bright red beard, his non-nationality was very apparent; the fact of a foreigner being in the place was soon bruited about, and reached the ears of the Fu.

The Fu had not at that time posted the proclamation, and when he heard of the arrival of a foreigner his mind was filled with alarm, for he thought that a consular agent had arrived to see if the clause in the Chi-Fu Convention with regard to the proclamation had been faithfully carried out. In fear and trembling of being reported to Peking, he posted it, and by its

side another of his own, exhorting the people to obedience and respect.

This country would run a very good race with the Holy Land (of the monks) for pre-eminence in local wonders. Chin-Tai promised me several for the next day. One from his description appeared to be a gigantic ammonite; another, fossil wood. Beautiful tales were in connection with these, which I never had the opportunity of thoroughly investigating. As for the intermittent spring, for which I had come all this distance, no one knew of its existence, although Monseigneur Pinchon had positively told me he had seen it here.

On the first day of the tenth month in every year the Sieh-T'ai fires a big gun at one of the mountains opposite; for if he did not do so the result would be serious. All sorts of bad luck would descend upon the town, many people would be killed, and tumults would arise, which would eventuate in plague, pestilence, and famine. This custom is probably a relic of the time when the Chinese were fighting and subduing the Man-Tzŭ. It is very likely that when this place was first occupied, they had a habit of firing a gun to remind the people of the presence of soldiers, and that the habit has since become a tradition clothed in the garment of fable.

The weather was very pleasant. The sun was shining all the afternoon, and there was no rain all day for the first time since leaving Kuan-Hsien. A strong wind came on after arrival; and the dust, dirt, and filthy rags of paper were blown from the window into my room, on to my table, and over everything. The view out of the window was very wild, and a huge wall of rock that reared itself up right in front was very much like the over-praised mountain of Mürren.

I now had to make all my arrangements for sight-seeing; and, bidding Chin-Tai to find out the distances from Li-Fan-Fu of all the objects of interest, I told him that the two things I especially wanted to see were a Man-Tzŭ village and the gigantic ammonite of which he had spoken. The intermittent spring I had given up altogether; probably it was the only thing worth seeing in the place, and consequently the only one about which the people knew nothing. When Chin-Tai came back, he said that the ammonite was twenty miles away, but that the rest of the things were all quite close, and that I could thoroughly 'do' Li-Fan-Fu in a short morning. I therefore made up my mind to see what there was to be seen before breakfast, and return to Ku-Ch'êng in the afternoon.

May 26.—The next morning several official servants and an interpreter accompanied me in my expedition; and as the tracks in the neighbourhood were all impassable for ponies, mules, or chair coolies, we were obliged to walk on foot, much to the disgust of Chin-Tai.

My satellites went two or three before me, and the rest behind, ordering people out of the way and keeping them from pressing round; and as I marched along, the streets were lined on both sides by the people, all turned out to see the show.

First I was shown the rock at which they annually fire the gun, where, high up the side of the precipice, there was a place where some of the stone had broken away, leaving a hole with perfectly squared corners, about which there was something miraculous. I next saw a box, with some dead man's bones in it, but as I could not clearly understand the story in connection with it, my credulity was not very severely

taxed. I was then taken up to the new pagoda, on a rock about two or three hundred feet above the river. The ascent was a little steep; and as Chin-Tai, since leaving Peking, had never taken a walk except on the two occasions when Baber and I made picnics from our junk, he was very soon out of breath.

The pagoda is a plain building of stone, but it is in a commanding position, from which a fine bird's-eye view of the city is obtained.

Li-Fan-Fu is situated on a little triangle of flat ground, at the mouth of a narrow gully. The river runs swiftly in front, and separates it from a wild and bare mountain, crowned with huge precipices that rise up some three thousand feet at the opposite side. It is enclosed by a wall, in many places broken down. This wall runs between the houses and the river, and then climbs a long way up the crests of two spurs which enclose the deep ravine running up at the back of the town; but as the houses are only built on the flat ground close to the river, the walls enclose a considerable vacant space. I counted the houses as well as I could, and at a rough calculation put them at about one hundred and twenty. The houses here, unlike those in other parts of China, are two-storied, generally built of stone below, with a wooden upper story and a balcony. Nearly all the roofs are flat, but a few of them are made of sloping battens of wood. There is a small suburb on the eastern side, but none elsewhere.

A rushing torrent comes down the ravine, flows through the town, and serves to turn numerous water mills, for as this is a corn and not a rice-growing country, there is a great deal of grinding to be done. The wheels are nearly always horizontal, and are enclosed in little low, round, flat-roofed houses, which

look like small forts ; they have one little door, and are hardly high enough for a man to stand in.

In this place, and around it, under the command of the Sieh-T'ai, there are five hundred Chinese soldiers, and three thousand Man-Tzŭ ; the latter are scattered about amongst the Man-Tzŭ towns and villages.

There is another Chinese town called Cha-Chuo-T'ing, twenty miles up the river, which is the last Chinese station.

We now crossed the river by a rope suspension bridge, the roadway of which was merely a few hurdles laid down, and walking about half a mile up the river, we turned into a deep ravine and came upon a couple of houses, where, as an illustration of intermarriage, about which I had been making inquiries, I was shown a Chinaman who had a Man-Tzŭ wife.

The people who were with me evidently thought that now we should go back.

'But where is the Man-Tzŭ village?' I said.

'Oh!' they replied, 'that is too far, ten miles away up there.'

I looked, and saw a village on the side of the mountain, about four miles off, and two thousand feet above me. Fortunately the people had not time to make up a story, as they had simply trusted that the mere sight of the village perched up above me would be quite enough to damp my ardour, but to their astonishment I insisted on going there. Chin-Tai was the most disgusted of all, for the sun was shining, it was somewhat warm, and he appeared to be wrapped up in an infinite number of wadded coats. He very soon became a piteous object. The road was desperately steep, and very stony ; every step he took was a labour to him. He was compelled to sit down and rest every few yards ; sometimes he threw himself

flat on his back with a groan. He several times declared that he was going to die, and I found it far greater trouble to look after him and make him come on, than to walk the distance myself a dozen times. My satellites kept their countenances fairly, but were evidently desperately amused, and I could easily see that amongst themselves they thought the whole proceeding eminently ludicrous. By dint of perseverance and much waiting, we at length succeeded in getting him to the top, and when there it was with true religious fervour that he 'knocked his head.' I found that the Man-Tzŭ people cultivated far more ground than I had thought. The upper slopes of the hills were all laid out in terraces, where barley and wheat were grown.

In this part of the country the term Man-Tzŭ is, amongst the aborigines, considered a term of reproach, they themselves preferring to be called I-Ran, or I-Jen: this is very unusual. The aborigines in the province of Kwei-Chou would rather consider I-Ran an insulting epithet; but here the term Man-Tzŭ is considered so bad that Chin-Tai would not let me go on, until he was perfectly sure I should make no use of the word 'Man-Tzŭ,' and in the conversations that afterwards passed in this village the term I-Ran was repeatedly used, and the word Man-Tzŭ not once.

This village was about two thousand two hundred feet above Li-Fan-Fu, but was not on the top of the mountain, which rose another thousand feet behind it. The houses were all of loose stones, with little windows like loopholes; the streets were not more than three feet wide, and everything was more filthy than usual. As we sat outside the entrance to the village waiting for Chin-Tai to drag himself up the last few yards, the clouds lifted from the head of a grand mountain to the

south of Li-Fan-Fu, disclosing vast fields of snow. This is called Hsüeh-Lung-Shan, or Snow Dragon Mountain, and the people said there were fields of ice where it was too cold for anyone to live.

In the village we all had tolerably good appetites, and did justice to a huge loaf of Indian corn bread that one of the Tinc-Chais brought straight from the ashes in which it was baked.

I then asked to be taken to a house where I could sit down, and the village school was selected. Here I soon gathered a few people around me, who gave me what little information they themselves possessed. There are two kinds of I-Ran people, those living at Cha-Chuo and beyond having a different language to those who live here.

The I-Ran of this place are very like the Chinese in appearance; they wear the same dress, as well as the plait, but they have good teeth. The Chinese, as a rule, have vile teeth, ill-formed, irregular, very yellow, and covered with tartar. The I-Ran here all talk Chinese, as well as their own language; their writing is Chinese; and the school children were learning to write that language. The I-Ran of the west have quite a different writing, which appears to be alphabetic, but I completely failed in my attempts to get the alphabet; all they could say was that they had a great many characters. I, however, made one of them write me a couple of lines, and on comparing their writing, which is from left to right, with pure Tibetan, there is really no difference, and their statement that the number of characters was very great was probably some confusion. They gave me the numerals and a few words, in which the connection between the two languages is quite apparent, although they are very different.

I sat asking questions a long time, and the schoolmaster wanted me to stop and breakfast, but this I could not do for want of time, and I set off as soon as possible for the descent. As we left, a tremendous drumming and beating of gongs commenced in another village, about a quarter of a mile distant, on the opposite side of a ravine. There was evidently some excitement, and from the tones of those who were with me, I suspected that up here my room was considerably more desired than my company, although my satellites appeared anxious to conceal the fact. Chin-Tai went down with much greater ease than he had come up, but it was three o'clock before we regained the inn at Li-Fan-Fu.

By this time I had a tolerable appetite for my breakfast, which I very soon disposed of, and then I prepared to start afresh. The chair coolies now declared it was too late, and wanted to stay here for the night; the usual dispute ensued, which ended as disputes of this kind always did, and the coolies with a grumble shouldered the empty chair and moved off. As it was late, and I wanted to get on quickly, I hired an extra man for the chair in which Liu-Liu was riding. The coolie demanded five hundred cash for the job, and all the bystanders declared that he was absolutely sacrificing himself out of pure generosity. By dint of much argument he ultimately compounded for four hundred cash. When the bargain was struck the people all swore he was a lucky dog, and as he had no difficulty whatever in finding another to do the work for two hundred cash, I felt that they were right!

It rained lightly all the afternoon, but we arrived at Ku-Ch'eng about seven o'clock, and here I was pleased to find Chung-Erh with the money and a packet of newspapers.

May 27.—Marching down towards Hsin-P'u-Kuan, the clouds lifted from a magnificent snowy mountain in the east. It is called the White Cloud Mountain, and it must be fourteen or fifteen thousand feet high. For I subsequently found the snow line at this season at an altitude of thirteen thousand feet; and the summit as I looked on it was at least one thousand or two thousand feet above the line of snow. Moreover, the snow lies on this peak all the year round, and the limit of perpetual snow must here be at least fourteen or fifteen thousand feet above the sea.

At Hsin-P'u-Kuan I visited the T'ing, a funny little man who, hat, button, and all, did not come up to my chin; and as the fat little fellow sat on a chair, he could just reach the bar between the legs with his toes. He wanted me (or said he did) to stop a day in his house, but I said my coolies had all gone on, and I must follow. He had been here ten years; he said that there was not much snow in the winter, although the place is nearly five thousand feet above the sea; he showed me a marvellous fish five hundred years old, which every now and then goes up to heaven through the roof of the tank, but always comes back again. There is also another much larger fish here; but no one has ever seen it, because if they look on it they become blind at once.

Besides these wonders, which, I thought, were quite enough for one time, there were one thousand taels of silver in the tank. They all declared that they could see it, but I was assured that anyone trying to take it away died at once. The T'ing had not, however, yet exhausted his stock of stories, and said that if I liked to stop he could show me a cave, in which not more than twenty years ago a dragon lived that belched forth smoke at a regular hour every morning.

I assured him that ocular demonstration was quite superfluous, and I started again, as the clouds were gathering ominously about the hills.

We marched up the river, and now the beautifully wooded slopes and magnificent verdure had disappeared, and the rocks were very bare. The I-Ran villages were seen on the tops of the hills all the way to Wên-Chêng, which we reached just before a good downpour of rain commenced. This is a very small hamlet with a nice little quiet inn.

May 28.—It was a fine morning when we started; the sun dispelled the mists; and every now and then there was a glimpse of the grand snow-capped mountains, on which snow lies all the year round. Each has its legend, and in one of them, called, 'The Sacred Temple Slope Mountain,' a great dragon is supposed to reside. Chin-Tai had a great love of the marvellous; he used to collect all the stories about dragons, and other wonderful beasts, and was delighted to narrate them to me on the march.

In many places along the river ropes were stretched from bank to bank; the inhabitants manage to cross by these, and even carry goods. An opportunity was soon afforded to us of watching a man cross with a heavy sack; a sight that was all the more thoroughly enjoyed when he stuck in the middle immovable until another man came to his assistance.

There are always two ropes, one for going, the other for returning, so arranged that each has a considerable slope downwards. A small runner is first placed on the rope. This is a hollow half cylinder of wood, about eight inches in diameter, and ten inches long. The runner is placed on the rope (a very large twisted bamboo rope). The man takes a strong line, ties it round his body, and then, by passing it two

or three times over the runner, makes a kind of seat for himself; it is then again passed round his body, and firmly secured. He is thus suspended close below the big rope; then, with both hands on the runner, he raises his feet from the ground, and shoots down the incline at a tremendous pace; of course, with a width of about one hundred yards, it is quite impossible to have one end so high that there shall be a regular slope all the way; so, notwithstanding the impetus he gets in descending, which shoots him some way up, the passenger always has to pull himself up the last few yards, which is done in the natural hand over hand fashion. This is a method of crossing a river that must require a considerable amount of nerve, when the torrent is roaring some two hundred feet below, dashing over most ugly and cruel-looking jagged rocks.[3]

The river still ran through limestone rocks, but in places on both banks there were extensive deposits of clay, *débris*, and sharp stones; the river has cut its way in one or two cases through this bed to a depth of nearly a hundred feet, and the perfectly horizontal layers are very plainly shown. Six and a half miles from Wên-Chêng there is a narrow gorge, where the road, scooped out of the side of the cliff, is closed by a gate with a roof and parapet. This gate was in course of repair, and the new and massive iron plated doors were not yet on their hinges. Immediately beyond this there is a square fort, through which the road is conducted.

Mao-Chou is very pleasantly situated, for just here the river valley opens out, and forms a little basin, about two miles wide, enclosed on all sides by high

[3] This is the *Chikd* of the Kashmir Himálya (see Drew's *Jummoo*, &c.; p. 123).—*Y.*

mountains. Two pagodas on two hills dominate it, and bring it good luck. The Chou was away at Ch'êng-Tu paying his respects to the new governor-general; but the T'ing sent his card, with a duck, a fowl, and some sweets. He said he was very busy, and hoped I would excuse him coming to visit me.

After having been some little time in the inn, Chin-Tai said the people outside had never seen a foreigner before, and hoped that I would show myself for a few minutes. He said they were respectable shop-keepers, and not at all rude people; so I went outside, and asked them a few questions, after which they begged me not to disturb myself any more, but to return to my room.

After this a small military official sent to me to say that he was sure I should be much gratified at a visit from his little child; and although the most simple-minded must have seen through the transparent artifice, I admitted him and his child to a private view.

May 29.—The T'ing called on me in the afternoon; he was a Shan-Si man, and having been at Peking knew something about foreigners. I showed the pictures of Kuo and Liu, the Chinese ambassadors to England, for these happened to be in a newspaper I had with me; he was very much interested, and asked for some illustrated papers, a present I was very glad to make him.

The Ma-Fu went afterwards to his steward, and said that I was a great official, and, like all high functionaries, expected to live on the fat of the land without paying anything; and added that I had sent him to the steward to get food for the pony, or money to purchase it with. This appeared to the steward a very natural proceeding on my part, and he gave the Ma-Fu half a tael. Fortunately the

affair came to my ears, and I was able to stop similar acts for the future.

May 30.—Before leaving Mao-Chou, Chin-Tai brought me a tale about two hundred thieves on the road. After discoursing me some time, he girded himself with a bloodthirsty-looking cutlass he had bought cheap in Shanghai, whilst I, much to his annoyance, contented myself with the armour of incredulity.

This was the first really fine day we had had since leaving Ch'êng-Tu. The morning was glorious; there was not a cloud in the sky, and a breeze from the snowy slopes kept the temperature pleasantly cool.

When we had marched two miles I looked back, and had a magnificent view of the Nine Nails Mountain, so called on account of its summit being broken into sharp peaks or points; but as for the number nine, it might just as well have been anything else. I had not before been able to appreciate the grandeur of this mountain, in which I could now see great fields of snow descending quite two thousand feet below its highest point. I stood and admired it for a long time, the people all wondering what I was looking at.

Very soon after leaving Mao-Chou, the mountains again close in on the river, which now runs through a series of narrow and precipitous gorges, great bare slopes and precipices running down to the water, and leaving scarcely a yard of level ground; except here and there, at the end of a projecting point, or up the bottom of a little valley, where a few flat acres are found and cultivated. The great mountain sides are ragged, and torn about in a marvellous manner, and huge masses broken from them lay strewn about. The road is cut out of the sides of the rock, and is often supported from below, or propped up for a few yards by horizontal stakes driven into the rock.

When a valley opening disclosed a view of the interior, the tops of the higher mountains to the west were seen to be well wooded; but there was no opportunity of seeing what lay to the east, as none of the valleys were sufficiently open.

We met a Man-Tzŭ Lama on the road, dressed in clothes of a coarse red stuff and a white hat, but as yet we had passed no regular Lamasseries.

We halted for breakfast at Wei-Mên-Kuan, a little village celebrated in the semi-fabulous history of ancient days. In the days of the Sung dynasty (extinguished in 1280 A.D.), one of the emperors had eight sons, the youngest of whom was sent as high military official to Wei-Mên-Kuan. The Mongols and Chinese were then at war, and some Mongols, commanded by a queen, came to this village, where a battle was fought, and the emperor's son taken prisoner. In accordance with the humane customs of the country, instead of leaving a captive to linger out a miserable existence in a dungeon, the queen was going to cut off the prince's head in a more or less gentle fashion; but her daughter, casting her eyes that way, saw that the man was of goodly proportions and noble face—in fact, altogether a godlike youth. She then and there fell in love with him, and her mother consenting, the wedding was celebrated with the pomps and glories necessary for such an occasion.

The inn at Wei-Mên-Kuan was the usual curious mixture of dirt and decoration; there were a couple of pictures of flowers, done in Indian ink with really an artist's touch; scrolls also on the walls, with proverbs on them, or extracts from some classic. In the centre of the ceiling there was a little rosette of red and yellow paper, with Chinese writing in a neat and small hand, but all covered with dirt and cobwebs.

In this part of the valley, besides the trees that had now become so familiar, there were a few of the soap trees (*Acacia Rugata*), in appearance something between an acacia and an ash; the fruit is very alkaline, and it is from this that the Chinese almost entirely make their soap, which they scent with a little camphor.

We halted for the night at Ch'a-Erh-^{Ng}ai, a village, if village it could be called, consisting of about two huts besides the inn. When I entered my room, I found five beds, on each of which was a filthy straw mattress. The people of the place were much hurt when I ordered the immediate removal of these hives of fleas; when I insisted on the dirt being swept away from under the bedsteads (which were merely two or three rough planks on trestles), it was too much for them, and they began to think me mad; and when I declared that I did not consider it a good plan to leave a heap of refuse in a corner, they gave me up altogether as a hopeless lunatic.

May 31.—From Ch'a-Erh-^{Ng}ai to Mu-Su-P'u the road is exceedingly bad, continually ascending and descending, and strewn with rocks and stones. Never leaving the river bank, it is sometimes three or four hundred feet above the water, and seeming for some distance to run along the face of the slope, the confiding traveller promises himself at least a few yards of level ground, when his hopes are rudely dispelled by a steep staircase of sharp and slippery rocks, where his whole attention is concentrated upon selecting a safe position for his feet. At this moment he becomes aware of a string of mules advancing from the opposite direction. All seems lost, for there is no room for animals either to turn in, or to pass one another; but fortunately round a projecting corner the road

widens for a short distance, and the two caravans get clear, but not without a great deal of shouting and some danger. The difficulties of the treacherous road may sometimes be lessened by a gentle slope; this lasts but for a short time, and the temporary relief is more than compensated for by a scramble that almost requires hands as well as feet, and seems impossible for animals. The ponies, however, encouraged by the Ma-Fu, whose cries resound from rock to rock, bravely struggle on, sometimes slipping on the glassy stones, but seldom coming down. Again the road abruptly descends only again to rise, until at length, after many a narrow escape, the village is reached, and the tired animals relieved of their burdens enjoy a roll in the dirt and what scanty provender may be provided for them.

About six miles from Ch'a-Erh-^{Ng}ai the river receives a considerable affluent from the west, called the Lu-Hua-Ho. A six days' journey up this river is the home of another of the Man-Tzŭ tribes, the Su-Mu, or White Man-Tzŭ, as the people here call them, a tribe numbering some three and a half millions; and the Ju-Kan, or Black Man-Tzŭ, live in the interior, an indefinite number of days beyond.

The sovereign of the Su-Mu is always a queen. When the Tartars were conquering the land, this tribe happened at that time to have a queen for a sovereign, who gave the Tartars great assistance, and as an honorary distinction it was decreed by the conquerors that in the future the Su-Mu should always be governed by a queen.

The Su-Mu have been pillaged by the Ju-Kan, their houses burnt, and their villages destroyed. The Ju-Kan now wanted peace, and had offered an indemnity sufficient to rebuild the houses; but the

Su-Mu were eaten up with the desire of revenge, and their queen was now at Ch'êng-Tu praying that soldiers might be sent to punish the Ju-Kan. If she ever succeeded in her mission she probably will find herself in the position of the horse in Æsop's fable, who desired the help of man.

We marched all day through the same wild gorge, hemmed in with bare cliffs and ragged rocks, broken at the top into pinnacles and crags of fantastic shape. Now and then some of the valleys opening out to the right or left were less precipitous, and were well wooded on their slopes. Once or twice I caught a glimpse of a snowy peak, but nearly all day we were shut in by the steep hillsides, and could see little besides them and a narrow streak of heaven above. When the road descended to the river, there might be a few yards of level ground, where the barberry and other shrubs seemed to grow luxuriantly amongst the rocks; but the general aspect of the scene was barren and somewhat dreary.

June 1.—From Ta-Ting the road at once climbed up the precipitous side of the valley by a tolerably gentle slope; and we soon began to breathe the pure and invigorating mountain air.

As we ascended, instead of being shut in by steep hills and cliffs, the slopes became more gentle, though often high above us, at the very summits, there were again great precipices. Amongst the slopes and crags were many tiny plateaux, cultivated by a few people, who seemed to gather but scanty crops from the unfruitful soil. The sides of the valleys were either well wooded with pines, or covered with close and thick brambles, barberries, thorns, and all sorts of shrubs which were deliciously fresh and green. Many varieties of wild flowers grew luxuriantly,

numbers of the purple iris in blossom, and acres of a kind of purple crocus; many sweet-smelling herbs shot up amongst the grass, and the whole scene is very fair to look upon.

As we ascended, we saw a great many cock pheasants strutting about, crowing loudly, quite innocent of fear, and unsuspicious of any harm from the hand of man. On this occasion their confidence was misplaced; and thenceforth my table was daily supplied with game, which varied the monotony of diminutive kids, shrivelled ducks, and emaciated fowls.

A steady pull of eleven hundred feet in four miles brought us to an inn close to the village of Shui-Kou-Tzŭ, where I found a room looking over the valley of the river. Here the air felt crisp and pure, and though the sun was shining brightly the thermometer at 9 A.M. was only 58° in the shade. Across the valley, a grand mountain ran down in precipices and steep and bare slopes, about three thousand feet, to the river; up a gorge to the left a deep green forest of firs crowned the summit; to the right, on a small plateau, a Man-Tzŭ village hung over the stream, with a little terrace cultivation at its side; in the background here and there a patch of snow was lying on the higher mountain-tops, and below in the bottom we could just hear the murmur of the invisible river as it tumbled over its rocky bed. The twinkling of the goat bells sounded pleasantly in the morning air, and after having been shut in for so many days in the close gorges, the place and all around it was very delightful.

After breakfast another steady pull of one thousand feet brought us to our highest point, and from here we had a fine view of the town of Tieh-Chi-Ying. This place is on a flat plateau, bounded on

three sides by precipices, or exceedingly steep slopes, which fall down to the river fifteen hundred feet below. On the fourth side apparently inaccessible mountain crags rise abruptly behind it, the roads to and from it being cut out of the face of the mountain, making it a very strong military position. In the early days of the Chinese here this was a large and flourishing town; the Chinese were at this time carrying on war with the Su-Mu, or White Man-Tzŭ; but one fine day the latter, in vast numbers, managed to get over the summit of the mountain, and amongst jagged rocks and crags, where it would have been thought that hardly a goat could get a footing, they surrounded the town and cut off the water, which was led by a conduit from a mountain stream. The Chinese were either overwhelmed by numbers, or forced to surrender for want of water, and the place was burnt to the ground. The White Man-Tzŭ have now been thoroughly subjugated, and are tributary to the Chinese, but Tieh-Chi-Ying has not yet recovered, for inside the extensive walls there are now but a few houses. There is a garrison of five hundred soldiers.

This country is admirably adapted for a mountain tribe to defend themselves in, and it is only by the gradual pushing civilisation of the Chinese, and the inevitable consequences of superiority of race, that these hardy mountaineers have been steadily driven back.

We now descended to the river by a steep zigzag, where loose stones lay scattered about the narrow path, and then followed the river bank to Sha-Wan (The Sandy Hollow).

There was a freshness in the early morning air that now made us feel we were thoroughly in the

mountains, and far above the oppressive heat of the steaming plains below. The road from Sha-Wan was very good, and the scenery most picturesque. On the right, crags and precipices rose into pinnacles generally crowned with clumps of pines; the northern faces of the hills were almost always well wooded with fresh green or yellow trees; and in the valley all sorts of shrubs grew luxuriantly. On the opposite bank of the river the hills sloped gently, and their sides were beautifully green with grass and shrubs. Presently on the road a string of yaks was encountered, to the intense gratification of my servants, whose lives had been a burden to them owing to my perpetual inquiries about this animal. I had, of course, seen them in the Zoological Gardens; but I had been looking forward with great interest to observing them in ordinary use. Now, I had almost commenced to look upon their presence as a myth, for I had been repeatedly told I should see them 'anon,' and I could not help recollecting certain fabulous salmon in the river Lar in Persia, where the inhabitants assured us that this fish abounded, and that great numbers were caught at the next village lower down. When we arrived at this next village, in answer to our eager questions we were told that there were none exactly here, but if we followed the river we should find some the next day. With exemplary confidence we continued our march, and were rewarded with the pleasurable information that our faith was fully justified, but that as all the nets were three or four farsakhs away, we must just go on a little further. Already in imagination we pictured ourselves feasting on some king of the waters; but still, like a will-o'-the-wisp, the lordly salmon was ever just before us, until we arrived at

the sea, and then, as we could not again be requested to move on, the excuse was ready that we had come at the wrong season. So at Ch'êng-Tu the missionaries said I could buy the beef at Kuan-Hsien, and that at Li-Fan-Fu the yaks were in constant use. The people of Kuan-Hsien told me that if I had come last month, when they killed a Mao-Niu, or long-haired ox, as they called them here, I might have had some beef, but I should get any amount on the way to Li-Fan-Fu. At Li-Fan-Fu they said they could neither show me yaks nor give me beef, but that at Mao-Chou I could get plenty of the one, and see any number of the others. On arrival at Mao-Chou, I was informed that the people were too poor to afford meat, and that the animal was not used for domestic purposes; but at last we met them on the road, and I was able to bring them back from the mythical realms to which, with Chin-Tai's dragons, they had nearly been relegated. They have longer horns than the ordinary cattle; but otherwise, with the exception of the long hair, are in appearance and size very much the same.

We met numbers of coolies on the road laden with red deers' horns, some of them very fine twelve-tyne antlers. The deer are only hunted when in velvet, and from the horns in this state a medicine is made that is one of the most highly prized in the Chinese pharmacopœia; the antlers that are shed are collected and brought down to the plains for sale, where they are converted into knife handles, and used for various other purposes. These are sold at Kuan-Hsien at the rate of fourteen taels for one hundred catties (about sixty-five shillings for one hundred pounds).

There were plenty of pheasants about; these were in size and appearance like our English pheasant, and

were without the white ring round the neck, characteristic of the bird generally found near Shanghai.

About eight miles from Sha-Wan, on turning a corner, a glorious view suddenly burst upon me; right in front was a perfect pyramid of virgin snow; the sun was shining brightly, and the brilliant white of the peak was all the more dazzling from the contrast presented by the deep shadow on the wooded flanks of the nearer mountains; this was Mount Shih-Pan-Fang (The Stone Slab House), and I stood almost spell-bound, lost in admiration. Long I gazed at this majestic peak, whilst my unsympathetic companion seized the opportunity to sit down and smoke a pipe, wondering the while what I could find to look at or admire.

During the morning we crossed the boundary of the Sung-P'an district, and a mile further arrived at P'ing-Ting-Kuan.

Every town and village now had a story to tell of some fight with the Man-Tzŭ, and numerous ruins, which from their appearance could not be very old, attested the truth of the statement that it was not more than eighteen years since there was fighting here. We arrived in the evening at Ch'êng-P'ing-Kuan, where on the bedstead there was a new piece of clean straw matting, to which the innkeeper, who had probably heard of my curious fancies, pointed with evident pride; but I knew too well the meretricious nature of this whited sepulchre. At my command the thin mat was lifted, and disclosed the ravening and wickedness below. There was a layer of straw and dirt underneath, that must have been accumulating since first the Man-Tzŭ left the place.

I received a visit from the Pa-Tsung, who commanded the garrison of eight soldiers. He came to

pay his respects, and to apologize for not giving me a present. He asked for some medicine for his wife, who had a gathering behind her ear that had been open for two months. After leaving me with the most polite reverences, he managed to spare one-fourth of his army as a guard, who encamped outside my door, and made night hideous with the hourly gong.

The people here live entirely upon Indian corn; rice is of course far too expensive, as none is grown nearer than Kuan-Hsien. The maize is made into circular or oval loaves about an inch thick, and every coolie carries two or three of these on the top of his load.

June 3.—The morning air quite made my fingers tingle; and I thought with pity of Baber sweltering at Ch'ung-Ch'ing, with the thermometer at 100° in the shade. The road was now good and level, and kept close down to the waterside. The scenery was very beautiful; the tops of the mountains were crowned with dark forests of firs, and the valleys opening east and west disclosed a vast extent of pine-clad heights. The bed of the river was much wider, and bounded by slopes clothed with shrubs of many descriptions, amongst which wild flowers grew in profusion; in one spot there was a field of wild roses, one mass of blossom, and the air was literally laden with the delicious perfume. On the northern slopes were charming little woods of the freshest green; and the yellow flowers of the barberry, everywhere abundant, helped to give that warmth to the colouring that always seems to characterise a Chinese landscape. Five miles from Ch'êng-P'ing-Kuan a valley opening to the east gave a near view of the snow pyramid Shih-Pan-Fang, whose summit, as I now could plainly

see, must be at least two thousand feet above the snow line. Pin-Fan-Ying is an important military station. It was quite new; all the houses were new, and the walls, which were exceedingly strong, had only just been built. Here there was a garrison of two hundred and fifty soldiers; and it is quite evident that, although, in these districts at all events, the Chinese have now conquered the wild barbarian tribes, still the reign of peace cannot be said to have fairly commenced.

At Lung-Tan-P'u, Chin-Tai came with the cheerful countenance indicative of misfortune, and declared that the dog had broken several fingers of one of my coolies. I was much relieved on ascertaining the nature of the accident, two or three slight cuts, caused by the chain being dragged through his hand. A piece of diachylon plaster, and an abundance of faith made everyone quite happy.

The simple confidence all the people about me reposed in my doctoring, and the intense pleasure they derived from it, would have been touching had it not been so sadly misplaced.

I shot some pigeons in the morning; they had a dark blue head, a purple green neck and throat. The back was light blue, with a broad white stripe across it; the tail above was dark blue, with a broad white stripe across the middle; the under side of the tail was the same as the upper; the breast was light blue; the wings, white underneath, had dark stripes on the upper side. They were much the same size as the English wood-pigeon, but did not fly so strongly. I have no doubt that regular search would have been repaid by many kinds of pheasants, but I saw only one species, and no other game-bird of any description.

June 4.—The landlord of the inn at Ngan-Hua-

Kuan had heard of my approach, and had cleaned up his house three days before in expectation of my arrival. Directly I came in he brought me a cup of the most delicious tea I ever tasted in China. It was of pale straw colour, like all tea taken by the Chinese, and the steam that rose from it diffused a delicate bouquet through the room. I was very glad to buy a packet of this from the friendly landlord; for as I had left Ch'êng-Tu with the intention of being absent for a few days only, I had brought with me a very small supply, which, like my candles and cigars, had now come to an end. I had been for a long time endeavouring unsuccessfully to make myself believe that I enjoyed the aristocratic water-pipe; but at last the conclusion was forced upon me that my tastes were vulgar, and venturing one day to borrow a pipe from a coolie, I never again resorted to elegant but trivial hubble-bubbles.

The coolie's pipe is the same all over China; but in Ssŭ-Ch'uan the method of smoking seems in accordance with the character of the people, who, being more independent in spirit, and less narrow-minded, are not so addicted to trivialities as the Chinese of other provinces. They, therefore, do not content themselves with the homœopathic doses of tobacco usually taken, but roughly roll a leaf of tobacco into a kind of cigar, and use the pipe as a mouthpiece.

We now entered rather a different country, the scenery everywhere indicating the proximity of the plateaux; the river valley opened out to nearly half a mile, and the bed itself became wide and shallow, the stream being broken up into several small channels. The mountains were now rounded, and separated by open level valleys, instead of the close narrow gorges which had hitherto been almost universal;

the main valley was all cultivated, whilst the hill-sides were cut into terraces, and crops grown all over them.

The Man-Tzŭ people had now been left behind, and we were approaching the country of the Si-Fan. These are a very wild-looking people. Some of them wear hats of felt, in shape like those of the Welsh-women, and high felt riding boots, and in their dress are much the same as the regular Tibetans. Now and then we met three or four, riding all together; and my truculent Tinc-Chais always made them dismount as I approached, in no way attempting to conceal their contempt for the conquered barbarians.

Sung-P'an-T'ing is on the right bank of the river, with an extensive walled suburb on the left; a hill runs down from the right bank, ending in a small cliff; and the wall of the town runs right up the side of the hill, taking in a great deal of open ground where barley and wheat are grown. The place seemed to have an enormous population for its size; and a crowd was collected in the streets; men and boys surrounded the hotel; the yard was full of people, many of whom were lounging about my room, even before I arrived. The hotel was unfinished, so it was at all events clean, and my room was large and light. There was no furniture in it; but a couple of chairs and a table were soon borrowed from somewhere; three planks put across two benches made a bedstead, and my upholstery was complete. For some time there was a crowd outside the windows, but a thunder squall came to my aid; and though a number of idle people and children remained gazing, everyone was very well behaved, and I had not the least cause for complaint.

CHAPTER IX.

A LOOP-CAST TOWARDS THE NORTHERN ALPS.

(*Continued.*)

SUNG-P'AN-T'ING BACK TO CH'ÊNG-TU.

Si-Fan Ponies—Reports of Game—Musk Deer—Si-Fan Lama—Language—Crops—Butter, Fish, Yak-Beef—Bitter Alpine Winds—Foreign Remedies Appreciated—The Traveller Quits the Valley ('Min River') and Turns Eastward—Si-Fan Lamassery—Herds of Cattle and Yaks—Desolate Hospice at Fêng-Tung-Kuan—Tibetan Dogs—Reported Terrors of the Snow-Passes—Summit of the Plateau of Hsüeh-Shan—Descent Begins—Forest Destruction—Verdure of Eastern Slopes—Splendid Azaleas—Slaughter by the Si-Fan—Luxuriant Gorges—Inhabited Country Regained—Chinese Dislike of Light—Shih-Chia-P'u—Miracle-Cave—Hsiao-Ho-Ying—Iron Suspension Bridges—Peculiarities of Chinese Building—Road to Shui-Ching-Chan—Gold-Washing—'Ladder Village'—*Mauvais Pas*—Lung-An-Fu—Approach to the Plains—Ku-Ch'êng—Fine Chain Bridge—Road to Shen-Si—Chiu-Chou—Chinese Fête Day—Moderate Drinking of Coolies—Preserved Ducks' Eggs, a Nasty Delicacy—P'ing-I-Pu—Boat Descent of River (Ta-Ho)—Great Irrigation Wheels and Bunds—Populous Country Again—Chang-Ming-Hsien—City of Mien-Chou—Road Resumed—Ill-smelling Fields—The Red Basin Again—Lo-Chiang-Hsien—Tomb of Pong-Tung—His History—Pai-Ma-Kuan, or Pass of the White Horse—Summer Clothing of the People—Method of Irrigation—Fine Vegetables—Roadside Pictures—Official Civilities at Tê-Yang-Hsien—Progress to Han-Chou—Marco Polo's Covered Bridge—Hsin-Tu-Hsien—Rich Country—Suburbs of Ch'êng-Tu—End of Excursion.

June 5.—Some Si-Fan ponies were brought down for me to see, and to purchase if I would. After the animals I had been riding they look enormous, and I estimated the height of the first I saw at thirteen and a half hands. He was a nice, strong-looking, grey pony, but without much breeding; and he was priced at thirty taels. The second was considerably larger, also a grey, but not so good-looking, although they

asked fifty taels for him. I measured this one, and found he was only thirteen hands one and a half inches, which showed how my judgment had been misguided by the very small ponies I had been accustomed to.

I was informed that, at a place two days' journey to the west, there were great numbers of red deer; and I was promised excellent sport if I felt inclined to make an expedition. Wild sheep and goats were said to live amongst the crags and rocks in the neighbourhood of Hsüeh-Shan; and the people told me that on the road to Lung-An-Fu I should see plenty of hares, musk deer, and pheasants; a prophecy that was completely belied; for although there were a great many pheasants for the first few days, I never saw a hare, a musk deer, or any other game. There must, however, be a considerable number of the musk deer amongst the mountains; for the price of musk at Sung-P'an-T'ing was only three times its weight in silver. The musk deer are not shot, but trapped; for there is a belief that if one of them is wounded he tears out the musk bag, and so disappoints the hunter. It is possible that terror or pain, or both combined, may cause the animal to eject the musk, as the sepia under similar circumstances squirts out its ink, and as, on the authority of Æsop, the beaver is said to tear out a certain gland and cast it to the hunter.

A Si-Fan Lama, diffusing a powerful and unpleasant odour, came to see me. He was the second Lama in a Lamassery not far distant. He wrote me some lines of his language, and gave me the numerals and a few words, which were quite sufficient to show that it is a dialect of Tibetan. His name was Nawa; he was a powerfully-built, upright man, with a very firm mouth, and a haughty look about his eyes, and

he had the appearance of one who knew how to command. His language sounded peculiar after having heard nothing but Chinese for so long. The letter *R* is rolled in a very pronounced manner, a striking contrast to the way in which this letter is slurred over by the Chinese, who in many cases cannot pronounce it, as, for instance, at the beginning of a word before *A* or *I*, when the *R* is changed into *L*. This confusion between *R* and *L* is rather curious to note; it seems inherent in the human palate. English children often substitute the *L* for the *R*; and according to Mr. Stanley, in Central Africa the same change seems to be of frequent occurrence. The Chinese cannot pronounce *rain* or *rice*: they always say *lain* and *lice*. Yet in other cases they are capable of producing the sound, as, for instance, in the word *I-Ran*.

The sound of the guttural *Kh* is also very frequent in the language of the Si-Fan, and there are other sounds that are quite impossible to catch. The word for the numeral *four* was repeated to me many times, and at last I could find no better way of writing it in Roman characters than *Hgherh*. *Fourteen* I put down as *Chu-ugurh*, and *forty*, *Hghtyetămbā*; but this orthography can convey but a feeble idea of the astounding noises the people make in their throats to produce these words.[4]

The crops here are nearly all wheat, oats, and barley, as it is too cold for Indian corn. There are also potatoes in the neighbourhood, and the market produced a vegetable like spinach. The principal food of the people is barley bread, and barley porridge,

[4] It seems probable that there was a mistake here between four and eight. Four, fourteen, forty in *Tibetan*, are *zhi*, *chu-zhi*, *zhi-chu*, or with the affix *thámpa* (full) *zhi-chu-thámpa*. Eight, eighteen, eighty, are *gyad* (or *gyä'*), *chu-gyad*, *gyad-chu* or *gyä'-chu*, or *gyä'-chu-thámpa*.—*Y.*

for which the barley is roasted before grinding it into meal. There is also some buckwheat, from which a heavy unleavened bread is made. The market produces the leaven and steam-baked bread, in the shape of dumplings, which seems to be universal wherever Chinamen are found.

Butter is made in the mountains by the Mongols, but it is not brought down here in any quantity, as this place is entirely populated by Chinese, who never make use of butter or milk in any form whatever. The landlord of the inn, however, had some, and made me a present of a circular cake about an inch thick, and six or eight inches in diameter, similar in shape, taste, and appearance to the cakes of butter found all over Eastern Tibet. The river produces a few little fish, very much like sprats in taste and appearance. Yak beef is plentiful, and costs forty cash a catty, and eggs cost seven cash each.

In the month of July there is an annual fair, when the Si-Fan, the Mongols of the Ko-Ko-Nor, and the Man-Tzŭ bring in their produce to sell. Skins of all kinds, musk, deer-horns, rhubarb, and medicines are the chief articles brought down, for which they take up in exchange crockery, cotton goods, and little trifles.

My landlord was a Mahometan, and his respect for me was much increased by my reputation for never eating pork or ham. He told me that he had been to the Ko-Ko-Nor, and that the journey occupied three months in going, and the same time in returning; the road, he said, passed over dreadful mountains, the very recollection of which made him shiver. In winter-time the cold is intense, and the wild winds that sweep across the frozen plateaux cut great gashes in the face or any part of the body exposed. He asked me to give him some medicine against the wind; and

as Chin-Tai declared that the possession of a bit of diachylon plaster would render him exceedingly happy, I felt I could not deprive him of the pleasure, although I rather spoilt the effect by telling him I was afraid he would not find it a certain remedy.

The ignorant superstition of the Chinese attributes to the foreigner all kinds of supernatural powers, which are even extended in their minds to European goods. Amongst many Chinese the application of grease from a foreign candle is considered a specific for small-pox; and European sugar is almost a pharmacopœia in itself.

June 6.—We left the valley of the river which had been our constant companion for so many days, and, climbing up a gorge, we soon obtained a good view of the town. Ascending a little more, we crossed a ridge here only eight hundred feet above the river, to the valley of another stream, running nearly parallel to the main river. We now ascended this valley by a good and easy road, and kept up above the stream as far as the Lamassery, where Nawa was in readiness to receive us. The Lamassery was a low wooden building, very irregular in shape; about some of the chief rooms there was some coarse embroidery; round the largest of the chapels hung a number of rough pictures of saints, painted on a sort of cotton stuff; in one there was an image of Buddha, who here is known by the name of Khătye-Tăbā;[5] in front of him there were a number of lotus-flowers, and ten little brass bowls of water. They introduced me into the cell of the chief Lama, who acknowledged my presence by a slight inclination of the head; he was squatting

[5] Buddha is usually called in Tibet *Shakya Thubpa*, 'Mighty Sakya.' —*Y.*

before an immense pan of ashes, counting beads, and muttering prayers.

I did not stop here long. The Lamas, though exceedingly polite, were excessively dirty, and smelt horribly. This elevated plateau-land being ill-adapted for agriculture, but few Chinese are found, and we were now almost entirely amongst the Si-Fan. Their architecture is very much the same as that of the Chinese, but they do not turn up the ends of their ridges and gables; indeed, at a distance, the houses look very Swiss. On the hill-sides the roofs are made of planks, laid anyhow, with big stones on them to prevent their being blown off, just as in Switzerland.

The march was up the valley bounded on both sides by rounded hills and low mountains, all covered with grass and brushwood full of pheasants; but not a single tree or wild flower was to be seen. Here the Si-Fan keep immense herds of cattle and yaks that feed on the splendid pasture. We passed no village all day, a single house, surrounded by a little patch of cultivation, at about every mile and a half, being the only sign of a population.

A great many bees are kept, but at this season there was no honey. The valley of the Sung-P'an river, covered as it is with wild flowers, would seem almost to have been designed by nature for the production of honey.

For the last two miles and a half of the journey we did not pass a single habitation. We were obliged to stop at a solitary wayside hut, as there was not another roof for many miles; and as a heavy chilly rain came on, and wild gusts of wind swept down from the snowy heights, none of us were loth to take shelter in the hovel at Fêng-Tung-Kuan, or Wing Cave Pass, as it is most appropriately called. This

place is not visited by any but a few of the poorest coolies, and the accommodation was suited to the requirements. It was a long low house of uncut, flat stones, between which the daylight was more apparent than the mortar; the single room, that constituted the public accommodation of this luxurious hotel, was sheltered by a gabled wooden roof, the ridge of which was left open in its whole length as an exit for the smoke of the fire, a most unlooked-for piece of thoughtfulness on the part of the architect. One end of the room, above which there was a loft under the gable, was divided off by a wooden partition; this portion formed the private residence of the hostess, and was on this occasion given up to me.

The people here keep very large savage dogs; in shape they are more like a colley than any other English breed, but much heavier about the head, neck, and fore part of the body. They have a very deep voice, and one of them would hardly let us enter the inn, if inn it could be called, for there was absolutely nothing to be purchased but a little buckwheat or barley bread.

Chin-Tai brought me awful tales of the terrors of the road that we were to traverse the following morning. He warned me that going up we must all be very quiet; anyone calling out or making a noise would be certain to bring on a terrific wind, a violent snowstorm, hailstones of gigantic dimensions, thunder, lightning, and every evil the elements could inflict. If a man on this mountain should express feelings of hunger, thirst, fatigue, heat, or cold, immediately the symptoms would be intensified to a very great degree. He told me that once a military official with an army of soldiers came to cross this mountain. He had with him his sedan-chair, to which about

twenty men were yoked, before and behind, who could not get on without shouting. The troops also marching always made a great noise. This high functionary was warned that he should not attempt to cross the mountain, for if he did some fearful accident would befall him. He laughed however at the warnings, saying that he had the emperor's order, and must go on. So he went. A fearful storm of wind and snow came on; half his army perished; and he himself very nearly lost his life. Such were the tales about Hsüeh-Shan with which I went to bed; and if I did not shiver it was thanks to the quantity of clothing with which I covered myself.

The floor of the loft made a sort of ceiling to my apartment, but there was a large square hole in it, and through this, as I lay in bed, I could see the long opening in the roof, and the stars beyond when not obscured by clouds; and at intervals the rain came in for variety. Fêng-Tuñg-Kuan is eleven thousand eight hundred and eighty-four feet above the sea; it fully justified its name, for it blew a violent gale all night; but I put on a considerable number of garments, rolled myself up in three blankets, and neither the wind, nor the rain, nor Chin-Tai's weird stories disturbed my peaceful slumbers. The story of the general who cried 'Excelsior' was familiar to me; but whether it was told me before, *à propos* of this mountain, or whether I have read it somewhere, I am not sure. I have no doubt that it is a tale tacked on to many mountain passes.

June 7.—When the morning broke, low clouds were scudding across the sky, driven by the wind that howled amongst the crevices in the walls of the hut. A chilly rain that turned to sleet did not enliven the scene, and soon we plunged into the dank mists that

swept over the summit of Hsüeh-Shan. One single partridge, startled from its bed, was the only living thing we saw as we made the dreaded ascent. The plateau, as the summit is approached, is bare and dreary; a climb of about one thousand feet brought us to the first sprinkling of snow, at an altitude of twelve thousand eight hundred feet above the sea; there was no snow on the path, but it was lying in little patches amongst the rocks, here all quite bare; a short distance more, and at an altitude of thirteen thousand one hundred and forty-eight feet above the sea we stood at length upon the summit of Hsüeh-Shan (Snow Mountain). At the very top there was a little hut without any inmates, but no one seemed anxious to remain here in the cold sleety rain; and quickly descending the steep path that leads to the west, we left the chill mists behind us, and soon reached a warmer climate.

Riding down another valley, that ran nearly east and west, on our northern side there was but little wood, all the slopes being covered with a rich green grass, but on the south, a serried ridge, whose summit was torn into wild crags and ragged pinnacles, bounded the valley, throwing out long spurs, where pine forests clothed the northern faces of the lower slopes, and masses of a shrub with white blossoms and a scent like our lilac, grew amongst the trees in lavish profusion.

These forests are being cut down in a ruthless manner, and as of course no attempt is made to plant young trees, of the ultimate fate of these beautiful valleys there can be but little doubt. The trees gone, the rains will cease; and then these ranges will become dreary, bare, and useless masses, like the mountains of Northern Persia.

A march of ten and three-quarter miles, during which we passed only three small huts, brought us to the village of Hung-^{Ng}ai-Kuan (Red Rock Pass), where the community lived in three houses. Here we halted for breakfast, and immediately afterwards heavy rain commenced, evidently no unusual occurrence, for the rich green of the dense woods that now surrounded us, and the wonderful verdure of the open slopes and valleys, were unmistakable signs that the climate of the eastern is much more moist than that of the western face of the great spur from the Himalayan plateau, which stretches to the south between the valleys of Sung-P'an-T'ing and Lung-An-Fu.

The ridges from each side every now and then threw out great masses of rock, ending in huge precipices over the valley; and between these green grassy slopes, with clumps of trees scattered about as in a park, ran up to the heights above. The bottom of the valley was wooded with low trees, and we marched all the afternoon through a thick copse, where there were not so many wild flowers as on the other side of the mountain. Here and there there was a house quite new, showing how recently the Chinese had reached this point.

The Si-Fan live only on the tops of the hills, and, as before, every opening has its tale of horrors. At one of them my attendants stopped, and said that here the Si-Fan had suddenly descended from their fastnesses, butchered five hundred soldiers in cold blood, and burnt all the houses without any provocation on the part of the Chinese.

'But what were five hundred soldiers doing here in the country of the Si-Fan,' I asked.

The question remained unanswered, and we

marched in silence to the village of Chêng-Yuan, three thousand feet below the summit of Hsüeh-Shan.

The inns on this road are only meant for the accommodation of coolies, and here I was obliged to displace the lady of the house from her den, as it was the only place that could be found; it had not much to boast of in the way of accommodation, but when a traveller gets four walls, and a dry roof overhead, there is not much cause for complaint.

The only provisions to be bought here were potatoes, which were sold at the moderate price of 1½*d.* per pound, and of which I laid in a large stock to take to Ch'êng-Tu.

June 8.—The river now ran for six miles through a narrow gorge, not more than one hundred yards wide, bounded everywhere by almost vertical cliffs, and clothed with the most dense foliage. In the valley there were azaleas fifteen and twenty feet high, covered with a mass of blossom as if prepared for a show at Kew. Wild peonies proudly planted their gorgeous flowers, and the delicate foliage of a small wild bamboo almost hid itself amongst the broad fronds of many a magnificent fern.

We passed three wretched huts, but except the little patch of garden round them there was absolutely no cultivation all the morning.

The affluent streams ran through exceedingly narrow precipitous gorges; but the foliage was so dense that it was impossible to see more than a few yards in any direction, except where the road rose a little above the river. Once I heard the roar of a waterfall, but though I was not above a few yards distant I was quite unable to get a view. The road was strewn with sharp stones, and although it never

rose more than thirty or forty feet above the river, frequent ascents and descents of no more than this were sufficiently troublesome over the slippery and broken rocks.

We halted at Yueh-Erh-^{Ng}ai, a little hut by the wayside. It was but a mere shelter, the back wall being made of a few loose stones, on which the roof-beams rested. Here I breakfasted, and two of the Tinc-Chais seized the opportunity to lie down in a corner, where there was enough shelter from the draughts for the lamps of their cherished opium pipes.

Beyond this place the gorge became more narrow, and the sides of the hills more steep, until the river ran between two vertical walls of rock running up a clear five hundred feet, separated from one another by but a few yards, where with marvellous pertinacity the trees and shrubs, which still grew in rich luxuriance, continued to get a hold for their roots in every crevice in the cliffs. The road was dreadful, the descents were desperately steep, and the slippery rocky path was often blocked by great masses of pointed stone; where this occurred, as it often did, in places almost like an exceedingly steep staircase, not more than two feet wide, with a rough wall of rock at one side, and a precipice at the other, the travelling was not exactly pleasant for us who were going down; and it seemed as if the ascent must be an impossible task for either coolies or mules.

The river (for it had become one now) dashed in a succession of waterfalls over its uneven bed, now blocked by some gigantic rock, or almost stopped by the perpendicular cliffs that hem it in on either side so closely that it sometimes seems an easy jump across the top. It is quite impossible to give any idea of this extraordinary gorge; I could hardly have

believed in the existence of a rift so narrow and so deep, and yet so wonderfully clothed with trees, ferns, and shrubs. On emerging from it, and looking back, there was nothing to be seen but a giant wall of rock; the chasm through which the torrent finds its way was nowhere visible, and it seemed almost impossible that there could be a road through that apparently impenetrable barrier.

This gorge comes to an end fourteen miles from Chêng-Yuan. The valley of the river then opens out, but it is still closed by high and rather steep hills; these are well cultivated, though there is a great deal of wood, and of the small wild bamboo largely used by the inhabitants instead of grass. In another three-quarters of a mile the village of Shih-Chia-P'u is the first collection of houses that can be, properly speaking, called a village since Sung-P'an-T'ing. The inn was of course small, but I enjoyed the luxury of a weathertight room. This apartment was the landlord's residence, prepared for me by two Tinc-Chais from Sung-P'an-T'ing, who had gone on before. The lighting arrangements were, as usual, defective; the walls and ceiling, nearly black with smoke and dirt, did not reflect a particle of light, and at four o'clock I was obliged to use candles, although outside it was quite light until about eight o'clock. The Chinese seem to have a positive objection to light, and it was always a mystery to me how they managed to pursue their vocations in the darkness in which they habitually live. The women may be seen working, and the men plying their trades of an evening by the aid of a filthy oil lamp that gives about as much light as a glow-worm.

I was invited to remain at Shih-Chia-P'u for a couple of days, and promised some venison if I should

consent. For amongst the hills there are plenty of deer. The trappers from the villages set their nets, leave them seven days, and then return for their quarry; they had just gone off, and were expected back in a day or two. In the winter the deer are driven down here for food and water, but at this season they always remain up in the high mountains, where there are also pheasants and other game in abundance. Whilst I was at dinner Chin-Tai told me that during the morning Liu-Liu had gone to sleep on his pony, that the animal had stumbled, that pony and rider had rolled over together, and that the fall was only saved from being a nasty accident by the united efforts of a Ma-Fu, a coolie, and two Tinc-Chais, who fortunately caught the animal's tail just as it was disappearing over the brink of a yawning chasm. Divested of the halo of romance with which Chin-Tai loved to adorn his tales the affair would probably have assumed a less appalling if not a trifling aspect.

In one of the most gloomy recesses of the long gorge through which we had passed during the day, it is said that a long time ago a hermit took up his residence in a cave; but finding that, even for Chinese eyes, it was exceedingly dark, so dark that he could not even see to boil his rice, he fixed a mirror on the opposite side, which not only reflected the rays of the sun into the sombre dwelling, but (such was the holiness of the man) it had the additional useful property of reflecting the moon also, whether that luminary happened to be above the horizon or not. The hermit has long since been transported to a better sphere, but they say his looking-glass still remains, and the traveller who should have the misfortune to be benighted in this desolate gorge may still

see the weird glimmer of the mirror on the darkest and thickest night.

June 9.—The country between Shih-Chia-P'u and Hsiao-Ho-Ying (Small River Camp) was not so picturesque, though perhaps more interesting than the wild gorges we had left behind; for there are no woods or forests, but where the land is not tilled, it is covered with long grass and brushwood. The principal crop is Indian corn, which is cultivated on the slopes that are not more steep than 30°.

At a village three miles below Shih-Chia-P'u there was a patch of rice about twenty yards square. Beyond this, a little was grown near every village; but the quantity was so small that rice can hardly be considered as one of the agricultural products.

The river valley opens out a little near Hsiao-Ho-Ying. This town is quite square, and is guarded from bad luck by a low pagoda, about two hundred yards outside the northern gate; it is surrounded by a wall overgrown with creepers, more picturesque than useful, as the place is dominated by a steep hill, from which stones might almost be kicked into the street. The first properly built houses in the valley were seen here, all that we had passed previously partaking more or less of the character of sheds; but every step we now took brought us nearer to Chinese civilisation.

At Hsiao-Ho-Ying there was a guard of twenty-five soldiers under a Pa-Tsung, who spared me one of his men to accompany me.

After leaving this the hills became more precipitous, there was less cultivation, and soon the river entered another short gorge, and descended rapidly by a series of leaps from rock to rock.

Five miles below Hsiao-Ho-Ying, at an altitude of about five thousand feet above the sea, there were the

first cultivated bamboos; there were also the two kinds of wild strawberries: the bright red deceitful berry, so frequent in the Ch'êng-Tu plain, whose innocent and beautiful appearance is sadly belied by its poisonous properties; and another unattractive plant, whose pale pink fruit has all the delicate flavour of the wood strawberry of Europe.

There was a great deal of holly amongst the trees; this was not exactly the English holly, but in appearance very like the tree that grows in the neighbourhood of Chin-Kiang, on the lower Yang-Tzŭ.

Nine miles from Hsiao-Ho-Ying the river is crossed by one of the iron chain suspension bridges, so familiar to travellers in Western China, but of which up till now I had never seen a specimen. Seven iron chains extend from bank to bank; these are tightly stretched by powerful windlasses, bedded in a solid mass of masonry. The roadway is laid on these chains. There are piers at each end; and from the top of these (about eight or nine feet above the roadway) two other chains are stretched, one on each side. These two chains droop in the middle to the roadway, which is suspended from them at this point; but as these extra chains are intended only to prevent the structure from swaying about, and not as an additional support for the weight, the roadway is attached to them at this central point, and at no others. This method of applying the two side chains is rather unusual; for generally they are parallel to the roadway, about three feet above it, and are chiefly of use as hand-rails.

Yeh-T'ang was my night's resting-place, where I again found myself in an unfurnished inn. The walls were not yet completed, and the upper part was open to the winds of heaven; but the deep overhanging

eaves prevented the rain coming in, and I was dry and free from insects. To the English architect it may seem curious that a house should have a roof and no walls ; but the Chinese always support their roof on a framework of wood, and when this is complete fill in between the timbers with wood, in a wood country, with stones up in the mountains, and often with lath and plaster, or with brick and mortar in the plains : the walls never supporting the roof.

June 10.—At Hsiao-Ho-Ying there was a ferry, and there was another at Shui-Ching-P'u (Crystal Village), where we halted for breakfast. These ferries are merely boats with one rope looped over another stretched across the river.

The valley from Yeh-T'ang-to Shui-Ching-Chan is very open, and the road generally fair, though bad in places. Every now and then it would rise a couple of hundred feet above the river ; at other times it was scooped out of the side of the rock, or propped up from below in the usual way ; the hill-sides generally were not too steep for the cultivation of Indian corn ; and close down to the river the quantity of rice was rapidly increasing. This was now planted out in beds, from which a crop of opium had already been gathered. Round the villages there was a little wheat and tobacco. We had the same wild flowers by the roadside, but by no means in the rich profusion of the upper part of the valley. There were a few shrubs of barberry, some magnificent white lilies in blossom, and flowering pomegranates clustered round the houses.

About five miles below Shui-Ching-P'u there were a couple of men washing for gold in the river-bed; but this can hardly be a profitable occupation, as in this valley I saw scarcely any other attempts to obtain the precious metal.

I was somewhat incredulous about the luxurious comfort that had been promised me in the hotel at Shui-Ching-Chan, and was not surprised when Chung-Erh, who had been sent on in advance, said that it was so bad that I could not possibly put up there. He had fortunately discovered a temple, where the priest had been willing to give up a nice, new, clean room, which was ready for me when I arrived. It was also the village school, and all the children in the place spent the afternoon and the greater part of the evening in a room next mine repeating their lessons aloud, in a sort of chorus, and before we (*June* 11) started in the morning they were already again hard at work. Our march led us through very much the same scenery, the river, exceedingly tortuous, everywhere running between peaks about two thousand feet high partly cultivated. In one place there is a very remarkable rocky promontory one hundred yards long, not more than ten yards broad at the base, and from fifty feet to one hundred and fifty feet high, projecting out from the hill-side, and almost enclosed by spurs from the mountain on the opposite side of the river. I stopped here a few minutes to make a sketch, and soon afterwards arrived at T'i-Tzu-Yi (the Ladder Village)—a well-chosen name for any village in these parts, where the roads are not much better than ladders. The people were still planting out rice, but it was nearly the last; and a little further down the valley this operation had been finished. Near here there were again one or two wretched creatures reduced to washing the sand for the scanty particles of gold to be found.

June 12.—Below T'i-Tzu-Yi the sides of the hills again became more steep; but still, wherever amongst precipices or steep slopes, a few roods of

ground not steeper than 30° could be found, there was sure to be a patch of Indian corn. This is about the steepest slope up which a man can walk unaided by his hands. From the opposite side of the river the face of a slope of this kind has all the appearance of being nearly vertical, and the people hoeing on them look like flies on a wall. There are generally ten or twelve together, dressed in a line that would please the eye of a British drill-sergeant; and as they advance from the bottom upwards, seen from this point of view, it seems that they must slip down, and be precipitated into the river below.

The road as yet did not improve: rising up one side of a spur, and zigzagging down the other, by a desperately steep and slippery ladder of rock. Wherever there had been landslips, the track was strewn with gigantic rocks and sharp stones. All the projecting rocky points were exceedingly precipitous, and generally almost vertical on their western sides, the eastern faces of the spurs sloping more gradually, and clearly indicating the direction of the geological upheaval. The river twisted and turned in a most incomprehensible manner, and whenever it washed the foot of one of these cliffs, the road was scooped out of the face, or propped up in the usual fashion. In one place, instead of using poles, long stones were put horizontally into holes bored in the face of the rock; across these other stones were laid, and thus the road was formed. Here and there, there was only just room for the ponies' feet, and in one place, when I was looking at the scenery rather than at the pony, he stepped so close to the edge of a rotten bank as to elicit a shout of dismay from the usually phlegmatic Ma-Fu. This individual used to walk behind, and where the descent was a very steep one, over big

stones or down a slippery staircase, he used to hold the animal's tail to prevent the glissade into space, that would inevitably have ensued on a false step.

Lung-An-Fu is situated at the foot of a spur thrown out by the mountains towards the river, the valley of which opens out considerably just before reaching the city. It is enclosed by a very long wall, running nearly a mile up both sides of the spur and across the top. This place rejoices in the majesty of a Fu, and the glory of a Tu-Ssu, who together are the representatives of the State, civil and military. They cannot together have much more to do than enjoy the emoluments of office; for though the streets were tolerably wide and clean, it seemed a very small place; and, as Chin-Tai remarked, there was a good deal of wall, but not much house. The officials were very civil; and whether it was owing to the vigilance of the swarm of Tinc-Chais sent me by the Hsien, or to the paucity of the population, the inn, such as it was, was kept perfectly quiet, except for two pigs domiciled behind my room, who passed the time between more or less successful mining operations in the wall, and protesting loudly against the cruel emptiness of their stomachs. The Chinese always starve their pigs for a day before killing them, and one of these suffered the last penalty even before I left.

An adventurous raft was here seen on the river, but considering the nature of the torrent, I was not surprised to find it alone in its ambition for the perils of shipwreck. The iron chain suspension bridges now became so frequent as to make it a matter for sincere congratulation that the Chinese had not discovered the irritating western system of the toll.

June 13.—Below Lung-An-Fu the river valley is

more open, and enclosed only by low hills, and by undulating closely cultivated spurs from the mountains behind. The hills retreat from the river at the bends, and leave flat plains nearly all planted with rice, where little hamlets and houses ensconced amongst clumps of trees give the landscape a peaceful, homely look.

The river here finds its way through a deep deposit of clay and rounded stones, from thirty to fifty feet thick; above which there are still the same limestone masses. This has clearly been the bed of a small ancient lake; gradually the river must have worn itself a deeper channel through the gorge below, or some slight earthquake shock may have rent one, by which the lake has been drained. Since then the water has cut its way through the bed of clay it had formerly deposited.

The appearance of the country indicates a great change of climate; the almost tropical wealth of verdure that characterises the upper part of the valley is not seen here, and everything shows that the rainfall must be much less.

The Indian corn was now four or five feet high, and the rice already from six inches to two feet. There were great numbers of the tung-oil trees, whose massive foliage gives a pleasant shade; and groups of coolies might be seen sitting under them, resting themselves, and enjoying the peaceful pipe. Apricots, too, were now in season, and, as well as great quantities of the Pi-Pa (or Loquot) fruit, were sold at stalls by the roadside.

The country produced plenty of vegetables; cucumbers could be bought for about a farthing, and tobacco, a great deal of which is grown in the neighbourhood, costs 280 cash a catty. It was a pleasant

ride from Ku-Ch'êng. The road ran along the side of a steep and precipitous hill about two hundred feet above the river.

There were a good many trees to give shade; and at one projecting point, under a fine ash, an old woman had a table with a few of the little eatables and drinks that appeal irresistibly to the palate of a Chinaman.

About six miles from Ku-Ch'êng, a long point, from a spur, projects into the river, and nearly joining the other bank makes almost a horse-shoe bend. This is evidently the point where, in ages gone by, the two banks have been joined, forming, in what is now the valley, above a large lake. Here the limestone rock appears at the bottom, and can be seen underneath the deposit of clay and rounded stones which accumulated during the period of the lake.

As we descended the hills again became more steep, and in some places were broken into precipices, leaving less opportunity for cultivation. There were a good many mulberry trees nearly despoiled of their leaves. In the villages the silk cocoons were put out in great flat baskets to dry in the sun, and the women were seen sitting at the doors of their houses spinning silk.

At Kuang-Yi there was a beautiful new iron chain suspension bridge across a large stream that here joined the river. This was not yet quite finished, though we were able to cross it. The piers were very massive, and solidly built of stone; the dip of the bridge was hardly perceptible; elegant triumphal arches were being erected at each end, and when complete it will be a really graceful structure.

June 14.—Beyond Kuang-Yi the hills again close in, as if loth to let the foaming river escape; the population again is sparse, and for almost the last

time the slopes are left partly uncultivated. There were some forlorn blackberries by the roadside, that seemed languishing for their companions of the forests; and throughout all nature there seemed to be a struggle for the mastery between the spirits of the mountains and the plain. The sun rose like a copper disc, threatening a hot and sultry day; but as the morning grew, the air was freshened by a gentle wind, that wandered amongst the trees, and lightly stirred the branches; and in the soft murmur of the foliage fancy might have heard a whispered farewell from the distant pine-clad heights.

On the road one of the Tinc-Chais pointed out what in England would hardly be called a footpath, leading straight up the side of a precipice, and with evident pride said that was the high road to Shen-Si.

We gained the entrance to Chiu-Chou just in time to escape a heavy pour of rain; and here the inn was of the dirtiest description. In one corner of the room half a dozen huge empty vats were piled; three bedsteads, where the usual pernicious mattresses sheltered untold myriads of fleas, lumbered the other angles. At one end a thing like a deep bookcase, with one shelf and no front, was sacred to the family deity; under this were the remains of all the earthen pots that had been broken in the household for generations; and there was an accumulation of filth among them that had collected during the same period of time. Another mouldering heap of corruption was under each bed, and what fostering rottenness might have been disclosed by the removal of the vats I dared not think of. There was, of course, the usual pigsty next door. I set the people to work to remove the filth, of which there was so much that in any other country there would hardly have been room

for it in the village; but in China there is always room for dirt, if there is none for anything else.

This was another of the Chinese gala days, when a great festival is celebrated, when coolies like to idle, when servants expect gifts, when gongs are beaten and crackers exploded, and when all who can afford it eat something more or something better than usual. The coolies sent a message by Chin-Tai to the effect that they wished me many happy returns of the day, or in other words hoped I would give them presents. In accordance with custom, I sent them strings of cash that they did not deserve. Then came Tinc-Chais bringing gifts of walnuts and eggs preserved in lime. The coolies followed after, and like Oliver Twist asked for more. In due order I forwarded presents to the Tinc-Chais, who now returned, and severally knocked their heads against the ground. Then the gongs began to beat, the sound of crackers rent the air, and when the merriment was yet at its height, I retired to bed.

June 15.—We now entered the country of stone bridges, and a little below Hsiang-^{Ng}ai-Pa there was an exceedingly elegant, one-arched stone bridge. Ssŭ-Ch'uan is justly celebrated for its stone bridges, and we all began to realise the proximity of the plains. Nearly all the water was off the rice fields; the Indian corn was high; there were melons in the gardens; the climate was hotter; the grass by the wayside was rather burnt; and for the first time in this trip there was dust upon the road.

There are no vines in Ssŭ-Ch'uan, although the climate seems well adapted for them. The story goes that there used to be vines, but some wise ruler, thinking the people drank too much wine, ordered all the vines to be cut down; the order was ruthlessly carried

out, and now, instead of good wine, the people drink spirits distilled from every kind of grain. Drunkenness is nevertheless almost unknown. During all my stay in China I scarcely ever saw a drunken man. I often used to see the coolies at breakfast taking their little 'chasse' of spirit; this they carry in stone bottles, which hold about as much as two sherry glasses, and they drink it out of cups not much larger than thimbles. Even this quantity is, however, a luxury they only indulge in now and then when they feel themselves very rich.

At breakfast I tasted one of the eggs the Tinc-Chais had given me, and thought it particularly nasty, although the Chinese consider eggs prepared in this way a great delicacy. Ducks' eggs are taken fresh, and steeped in a solution of lime and salt; the lime penetrates through the shell, turns all the egg quite black, and leaves a perceptible taste. After this the egg is encased in clay, and baked. In this way, with the clay outside, they will keep many months. The white becomes a jelly, and the yolk is in consistency like that of a rather hard boiled egg.[6]

At Hsiang-Ngai-Pa the river has at length escaped the trammels of the mountains, and though still a rushing stream, much encumbered by rapids, boats now navigate it, and can descend all the way to the Ocean Sea. The coolies had counted on an idle day, but Chin-Tai brought back the mournful news that the craft at this place were not large enough for us; so with sorrowful countenances they shouldered their loads and tramped to P'ing-I-P'u.

June 16.—This was a joyous day for the coolies.

[6] When Commissioner Yeh died a prisoner in Calcutta, several large chests of these eggs were found, which he had brought with him from China to solace the years of captivity.—*Y.*

We walked about a quarter of a mile to where a boat sufficiently large to accommodate us all was waiting for us. We were soon all packed and under way, and began the descent. There were rapids at about every half-mile, and the current was everywhere very strong. Many boats were tracking up, and the old familiar songs of the trackers resounded amongst the rocks. We seemed to fly past the shore, and several times in the shallows there was a scraping and bumping and a taking in of water over the bow that would have been alarming to weak nerves.

The first part of the journey was through narrow gorges, with precipices at each side; but at last the valley opened out for good, and we bid a final farewell to the mountains. The low hills which now bounded the river were of very red rock, well wooded; and though the slopes were easy, there was little cultivation on them. As in the basin of Ch'êng-Tu, there were a great number of trees in the plain, which was somewhat *tropical* in appearance. This was partly caused by some trees that had very straight and bare stems, and a bunch of foliage at the top, which in the distance looked like palms. There were great numbers of water-wheels for raising the water from the river; the appearance of twenty or thirty of these gigantic wheels, side by side, moving round in a most deliberate way, is very peculiar. These contrivances are exceedingly simple, but very effective; the diameter of the wheels is about twenty-four feet; bits of matting or light pieces of wood make the floats, and small bamboos about a foot long are the buckets. The current acting on the floats turns the wheel round, and the buckets, arranged round the circumference, lift the water to a trough. As the level of the river is of course liable to extensive variations,

these wheels are not turned directly by the river, but by the water flowing through little canals, which at this season were considerably higher than the main stream.[7]

The bunding work all along the river is very extensive; the bunds being, as at Kuan-Hsien, of wicker baskets filled with boulders. A great deal of water of course constantly runs through, but this does no harm, and the dykes so formed keep back water enough to fill the irrigation canals. In some places the banks of the river are embanked, but in nearly every case the bund is made for the purpose of irrigation.

On we dashed, and a passing glance was all that could be obtained at the villages with their fields of tobacco; or the busy fishermen in their flat-bottomed punts, and a row of cormorants in the stern. We shot many a rapid in the morning's run, and anchored at Chiang-Yu-Hsien, where, as the Tinc-Chais were to be changed, I decided to go to an inn for breakfast. As I stepped ashore I saw a number of braves at target practice with bows and arrows, but I could not stop to watch them, as a crowd seemed to spring out of the ground, and I walked up to the town through a miscellaneous swarm of grown-up people and laughing children, who moved about amongst their elders' legs.

The distance was not far, but it was enough to show that we had now entered a different country. There were a great number of people in the fields and on the roads; crowds of boats were anchored off every considerable town, and the traffic on the river was very great. The towns were large, and full of

[7] There is a very careful and accurate detailed drawing (to scale) of one of these wheels in Staunton's account of Earl Macartney's embassy.

people; the fine open shop-fronts exposed rich goods for sale inside; and there was an appearance of wealth and prosperity, of life and activity, about the country, that contrasted remarkably with the miserable poverty of the mountains.

It was a sudden change from the quiet little mountain village that I left in the morning to the busy, noisy town where I breakfasted. I could, as I sat in the inn, hear all the going to and fro in the streets, itinerant vendors selling their wares and crying them out, and the constant chatter of the coolies in the restaurant hard by.

June 17.—Chin-Tai had already hired a boat for the next stage, but on arrival at the landing-place the captain wanted to take an extra cargo of passengers; there was a fierce battle over this; as usual all the people began shouting at one another; but matters did not take a favourable turn until the muscular Chung-Erh dropped one or two of them into the water, when the rest seemed no longer anxious to retain their seats, and the appearance of the four Tinc-Chais and superior officer from Chiang-Yu-Hsien, all in alarmingly gorgeous apparel, so overawed the captain that he actually held his tongue.

Huc declares that a pious Buddhist will not even kill the vermin with which his body swarms; my coolies went further, they wanted to sit in the bows of the boat, so that the breeze, instead of blowing the parasites into the water, would waft them gently about the vessel; some might even have visited me, but the coolies did not mind this, and objected to move until Chung-Erh again stretched himself. Then they went aft, except one, a confirmed opium-smoker, with a pimply red nose, who had wound his plait round his head, and arranged an enormous white lily in his

hair, so as to bring the pure white of the flower into artistic contrast with the fiery hue of his rubicund organ. He pretended to be a boatman, until his complete ignorance of nautical manœuvres disclosed the imposture. He next endeavoured to conceal himself behind the legs of the captain, but the legs of the captain were thin, and the coolie was stout, and this attempt was not a complete success. He then tried to hide behind my chair, but the broad brim of his hat bewrayed him, and he was ignominiously ejected and driven to the stern.

The river was now not so headstrong as it had been above Chung-Pa-Ch'ang, but, like a youth, had sobered down with increasing age, and the rapids, though numerous, were insignificant. After five miles we stopped at Chang-Ming-Hsien to get fresh Tinc-Chais; I did not go into the town, but landed to look at the crops, which were chiefly Indian corn, with beans and ground nuts.

The Hsien sent the usual anatomical fowls and ducks, an article that Chin-Tai facetiously called a ham, and some Tinc-Chais, whose beautiful clothes quite dimmed the lustre of the men from Chiang-Yu. As soon as the latter had knocked their heads, and the others had been installed, we started again.

I was amused at the artifices of some half-dozen of the coolies, who, taking up airy positions in the bows, again hoped they might escape my notice; the old villain with the lily held out till the last, and absolutely refused to get away until Chung-Erh beat him about the folds of his garments with a string of cash.

The river, now from seventy to a hundred yards wide, here ran through a broad flat valley, bounded by hills from fifty to one hundred and fifty feet high;

sometimes narrowing, a rocky point with a pagoda on its summit would project into the stream; then the hills retreating, would leave an amphitheatre of cultivated plain. The slopes were of red rock, and were mostly covered with small woods, and notwithstanding the close cultivation of the plains, room was yet found in them for many groves of trees. In the evening our river journey came to an end at Mien-Chou, a large and important place, protected from the river floods by very extensive well-built river walls. The streets were nice and clean, and free from smells, and there was a really good inn. I attracted no attention, not so much as one little boy running after my chair.

Great quantities of beautiful vegetables were displayed in the market; large cabbages as round as cannon balls, splendid turnips and brinjalls, and magnificent cucumbers in such quantities that it would be impossible to make use of them without the coolies, whose cast-iron digestions permit them to eat large uncooked cucumbers, skin and all. There was another vegetable unknown to me, in appearance, colour, and shape like a very large and perfectly smooth cucumber; these are boiled, and the part between the rind and the centre is eaten. The principal food of the coolies was still Indian corn, and very few could as yet indulge in the luxury of rice.

The want of rain was beginning to be felt here, and the people were fasting, praying, burning incense, and beating gongs, whereby they hoped to bribe or terrify the deities.

June 18.—I used to put my clock on five minutes every day to counteract the tendency of my servants to get later each morning. They never discovered

the artifice, and when we started from Mien-Chou it was barely light.

There was no one in the streets, and the roads were quite deserted, as we were before the earliest of the early coolies. This, however, soon changed; all became life and bustle, and everything showed that we had now struck a great highroad. Numbers of coolies going both ways, chairs and ponies and frequent tea-houses enlivened the scene.

The road first followed up a small stream in a flat valley, bounded by low undulations, rising to about one hundred feet. In the valley of the stream the crops were still Indian corn, beans, and ground nuts; of the latter the Chinese make oil, as they do of almost everything; they also eat them; and at all the stalls by the roadside there are little piles of some twenty of these, which are bought for a cash or two.

Rice was now extensively cultivated; the people were manuring their rice fields with liquid manure, and the smell of the country, far from being sweet, was abominable.

A great number of melons were grown in this neighbourhood, and in the gardens quantities of vegetables.

The road now left the stream, and entering the undulations followed a ridge about one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet high, from which little valleys sloped down on both sides, all laid out in terraces for cultivation, chiefly of Indian corn.

The want of rain here was terrible; the rice fields were quite dry, and the Indian corn in places looked rather burnt up.

The landscape was very pretty, the hills of a red clayey sandstone, and the houses, which were scattered

about, all hidden in trees. The slopes were interspersed with little woods, the fields were particularly neat; and every now and then looking back the valley we had just left could be seen, the rice fields at this distance giving the appearance of an immense and rich flat pasture land.

A little inn received me at Hsin-P'u, where there was a sort of court with three walls and a roof; there was a screen in front, and though very small, being open, it was tolerably clean. I sat down here to breakfast, much to the astonishment of the Tinc-Chais, who thought it impossible for me to stop in such poor quarters.

About five miles from Hsin-P'u the road passes over another plain, which was very dry, and, crossing a low range of undulations, entered the valley of Lo-Chiang-Hsien. Here the country was at length well watered, and the crops very fine. The rice was getting large, and had arrived at the stage when the farmers, with their wives and children, go into the fields and stir up the mud about the roots with long poles and with their feet.

We left the main road here and followed the river, crossing its two branches by low bridges, impassable in the rainy season, when the river is crossed by a fine bridge lower down.

There was a suburb nearly three quarters of a mile long before the gate of Lo-Chiang-Hsien was passed, and then we entered a long, broad, well-paved, quiet street of private houses, with the garden walls on each side looking clean and nice. We went through nearly half a mile of this before entering the busy part of the town, and we had hardly emerged into the bustle and commotion when a turning led us to a very good and quiet inn.

The presence of a foreigner seemed almost unnoticed, perhaps because other Europeans had already traversed the road from Ch'êng-Tu to Mien-Chou.

The road all day was very good, level and well-paved, a great treat to every one after the difficult mountain tracks of the past month. The thermometer rose to 88°, but with a pleasant breeze the day was agreeable for travellers.

The Hsien sent the usual duck, fowl, and sweet cakes; and we changed Tinc-Chais again.

The grave of Pong-Tung, or Pong-Chou, is in the city of Lo-Chiang-Hsien. Pong-Tung was a celebrated man, who lived in the third century of our era, during the reign of the great Liu-Pi, a monarch who, from the countless stories associated with his name that are interwoven in the annals of this period, seems to have taken the place in Chinese history assigned to King Alfred in our own.

Pong-Tung at first attracted the attention of Chu-Ko-Liang, the prime minister of this sovereign, who recommended him to Liu-Pi; but the latter declined to put him into any high position, and only made him a Hsien. He was very discontented, and spent his time in making sonnets, eating, drinking, and smoking.

This came to the ears of Liu-Pi, who sent Chang-Fi to him with orders to cut off his head, unless he saw good reason for not doing so.

When Chang-Fi arrived, there were about one hundred people outside the yamen, waiting to have their causes tried, and Pong-Tung was amusing himself in an indolent way. So Chang-Fi said to him:

'What are all these evil reports that I hear of you, that you waste all your time in indolence, and writing sonnets?'

'What!' replied Pong-Tung; 'what am I to do? Why am I put in this inferior position of a Hsien, where I have nothing to occupy me? And why should I not write sonnets, if the king gives me nothing better to do?'

'But,' answered Chang-Fi, 'I see an immense crowd outside your yamen waiting to be judged. Nothing to do!' he repeated with some anger, 'how can you say that? there is work outside for weeks!'

Said the other, 'Work for weeks, forsooth! Perhaps so for those little men of inferior ability who frequent the court; but a man of talent does much in a short time.' Making a sign to an attendant, he summoned the first complainant, and, like a sharp barrister, seizing the points of the case, dismissed the parties satisfied in about two minutes.

One after another the people came in; he listened to their pleadings, attended to what their opponents had to say, and before very long the court of the yamen was clear, every one of the people having left perfectly satisfied with the justness of the decisions given.

Thereupon Chang-Fi rose up, and said, 'This is no place for you'; and, returning to Liu-Pi, he told the story. Pong-Tung was sent for, and eventually became the left prime minister of Liu-Pi, and before Chu-Ko-Liang himself. (In China the left hand takes precedence of the right.)

June 19.—The road for some miles to the west of Lo-Chiang-Hsien passed through an undulating country, where the want of water was sadly apparent; some of the rice fields being quite dry, and the soil cracked.

The highest point of these undulations is not much more than two hundred feet above the level of the

plains, but they form the water parting between the basins of the river of Lung-An-Fu and the rivers that water the Ch'êng-Tu plain.

Pai-Ma-Kuan, or the Pass of the White Horse, is amongst these undulations. It is so called after an event in the life of Liu-Pi.

After the disastrous battle when Liu-Pi lost his wife, the king was mounted on a remarkable white horse; his enemies knew this, and were scouring the field in search of him, when his prime minister, Pong-Tung, or Pong-Chou, riding up, prevailed upon his master to change horses, on the plea that his was the faster of the two. The monarch, whose noble nature, if he had known that the white horse was the object of the chase, would never have consented to the exchange, escaped; Pong-Chou was killed, and buried in a temple at Lo-Chiang-Hsien, where his grave is still shown. A little further we came to where a great drumming, beating of gongs, shouting and chaunting was going on. Inside a number of candles and incense sticks were burning before several gilded images; there were about a dozen men and boys in the place, all more or less officiating; there was no priest, for the temple did not possess one, but an official servant belonging to an adjacent hamlet, who was well acquainted with the prayers and drill of the proceedings, was standing before the principal altar, reciting the formulæ and giving the signals for the others to say their 'Amen.' This was done by violent shouting, and beating drums and gongs. They seemed very well amused, and as I saw that clouds were gathering, I had no doubt their prayers would turn out efficacious.

All the people were now in their summer garments; the blue turban, which was so universal a

month ago, had quite disappeared; most of the coolies were bare-headed, or wore enormously broad-brimmed straw hats. Their bodies were naked, the poles on which they carried their loads resting on their bare shoulders. Their loose blue cotton trousers reached no lower than the knee; a cotton cloth was twisted about their waist like a cummerbund; an enormous quantity of bandages were wound round the leg between the knee and ankle (I have counted as many as eighteen turns), and a pair of straw sandals completed the costume.

The better classes had straw hats of rather a finer material, white cotton coats, loose white cotton trousers, and cloth shoes. Fans and umbrellas were universal.

Seven miles from Lo-Chiang-Hsien the road enters the busy and fertile plain of another river; and after all the mountain travelling, where poverty was so painfully apparent, and there was so little life and activity, it was a pleasant change to be again in this country, where everything betokened comfort and prosperity.

The soil was a grey clay, and the crops much the same as before, but rice was gradually ousting the Indian corn, and as we advanced further there was little else.

Great numbers of trees were cultivated, and in many places along the roadside there were little groves that gave a delightful shelter. There was a remarkable absence of fruit trees; I had seen none since leaving the mountains; but peaches, apricots, and greengages were exposed for sale.

Again we heard the familiar sounds of the creaking wheelbarrows and treadmills, as coolies industriously pumped up the little remaining water from

the lower levels, and from the reservoirs, of which there are a good number by the side of the road. These reservoirs were deep pits, about ten or fifteen yards in diameter, sometimes lined with concrete; now they were beginning to look wofully empty.

The gardens round the houses, and outside some of the large towns, were especially neat. I have never seen vegetable gardens so beautifully kept anywhere else. Luxurious cucumbers trailing over a kind of trellis-work of long rushes planted in perfectly straight lines in double rows, separated by about three feet at the bottom, and meeting near the top; little square patches of onions in rows, with never a weed between them; and all sorts of vegetables, each in a neat little oblong or square bit of ground. All the vegetables that are displayed in the streets come from these gardens; and at Tê-Yang-Hsien the show was magnificent, indeed I never saw such a lavish profusion of beautiful fresh vegetables spread out for sale as there were here. Amongst others a kind of bean that produces a pod nearly a foot in length; this is boiled and eaten, pod and all. It is a little too hard for the European taste, but the Chinese like to hear the sound of their teeth in what they eat, whether it be a peach or a bean.

Great numbers of coolies were seen on this road carrying large baskets of vegetables northwards; and a coolie, with his brown body, blue trousers, and baskets of deep reddish-purple brinjalls, with a large bunch of fresh green chillies at the top, would make a study worthy of some of the old Dutchmen who were so fond of painting fruit and vegetables.

Every spot of ground is cultivated, and where there is a ditch, or small watercourse, running by the road, there will be a row of beans at each side, and

sometimes a little rice in the water; this is quite safe, and no one thinks of damaging or interfering with it.

Passing a cottage by the roadside, screened by a clump of bamboos and a fine ash, the family may be seen inside seated at dinner. The father has just come in from his work in the garden or fields, he has nothing on his body, and there is a passing glimpse of little dishes and chopsticks as the simple meal is discussed.

Now there is a village, perhaps only two or three houses, and here there are sure to be some half-dozen naked little children playing about, or tumbling amongst the inevitable pigs that belong to every dwelling. Outside every house one or more little pigs are tied up, some by the head, some by the tail, some have a string round the leg, and others round the body; but a little pig tied up somehow there is to almost every door, not to mention the numbers that run squeaking about under the ponies' feet, while their elders lie grunting in the middle of the road.

Later in the day the women and girls bring their sewing and work to the doors, or sit in the shade outside their houses, some embroidering, others making the shoes—for in many houses all articles of clothing are made at home—and just now a great many were spinning silk.

Here is a quiet tea-house under some fine trees, and a couple of sedan-chairs are in the road in front. Their occupants are sitting at one of the tables drinking tea, or eating one of the dainty dishes that are always displayed so profusely, while the coolies enjoy a rest, smoke their long pipes, or perhaps spend a couple of cash on a cake of wheaten flour or whole Indian corn.

Passing through a big and straggling village, there

are as many as fifty coolies all together in some favourite tea-house that has a good reputation along the road; here the almost naked waiter has enough to do, the calls for rice (for the rice is now getting cheap enough even for coolies) and hot water being incessant; and the rattle of the chopsticks, and the gobble-gobble of the men as they shovel their favourite food into their mouths, can almost be heard.

Here, in a deep stream of water, crossed by a neat stone bridge, are a couple of buffaloes enjoying a bath, the string through their noses held by an urchin sitting on the parapet, who turns round with wonder at the sight of a dusty foreigner, with such very hot clothes, walking or riding on a pony when there is a comfortable chair behind.

Now we are again in the country of handsome and beautifully decorated triumphal arches (I counted as many as eight on the outskirts of Han-Chou), and a couple of beggars in ragged clothes lying asleep in the shade of one of these, with a few cucumbers at his head, would be a fit study for Murillo.

The towns get busier and more crowded as the capital is approached; they do not seem to have any speciality in the way of trade, half the shops in the main street being tea-houses or restaurants; the numbers of these, and the numbers of people that at all hours of the day are eating and drinking, is surprising.

In a few shops there are cotton goods for sale, and in others odds and ends, such as crockery, great numbers of wax candles, and tapers for burning at the altars.

Many look like chemists' shops, with little drawers and jars; others sell great quantities of fans; but, besides the eating and drinking and providing for the wants of this life, by far the greater number of the

rest are given up to the accommodation of the dead; coffin-makers everywhere appearing to do a marvellous trade, and shop after shop is passed where the fearfully heavy and lumbering coffins of China are made in numbers that one would think would provide for the wants of half a dozen generations.

A good deal of furniture is made; and nicely carved bedsteads and cupboards, sometimes inlaid with ornamental wood, are seen, both complete and in process of manufacture.

In the busy thoroughfares there are sure to be half a dozen barbers' shops, and here you see the Truefitts of China, generally boys of about twelve to fifteen years old, shaving the heads, washing, oiling, and doing up the plaits of their customers, who, seated in a comfortable chair, smoke a long pipe and fan themselves while this luxurious operation is going on.

As we advance to the west the water in the country increases, until we again come to the streams running by the roadside, and here the crops look beautiful. The rice is getting on well, and the Indian corn in some places is nearly fit for harvesting; but the amount of the latter gradually diminishes, until very nearly the whole country is given up to rice.

Tê-Yang-Hsien is a fine large town, with broad, clean streets, where we found an excellent inn.

The natural politeness of the people here overcame their curiosity, and although I rode on the pony through the busy streets full of people, no one followed me, not even little boys. The Hsien sent me many presents, and satellites innumerable, with whom I marched out in state.

First came four Tinc-Chais, each with the summer

official hat, for there is a summer dress and a winter dress, and all over China this dress is changed on the same day by an edict in the Peking 'Gazette.' The summer hat is of light straw, conical in shape, the base being about one and a half times the height. At the top is a tassel of red silk, which a high official is always very careful to have arranged so that it spreads equally over every part of the hat.

One of the Tinc-Chais has a grey coat, tied in at the waist with a cummerbund, into which he has tucked the tails to prevent their dragging on his heels. The sleeves are always a foot too long, and the ends of these long loose sleeves are used indifferently as towels or dusters; on the march they may be tucked up to leave the hands free to use the fan.

Another wears no cummerbund, but has an umbrella strapped to his shoulder.

All four wear the ordinary Chinese dress of long loose coat, and trousers coming a little below the knee. Two of them wear bandages round the calves, and all have the usual straw sandals on their feet.

They walk in front of me, calling out to the people to get out of the way, and making the creaking wheelbarrows draw up at the side of the road as I pass; sometimes these will be loaded with a couple of huge fat pigs, lying on their backs, their legs straight up in the air, and lashed to the barrow with strings round their fat stomachs.

The steward's Ma-Fu rides behind me, and the steward himself, who is a person of much importance, rides next. The Ma-Fu has a huge straw hat, his coat is open in front, showing his breast, and he has nothing on his feet. The steward is well dressed, with a blue lining to the underside of the broad brim of his straw hat, and wears stockings and shoes.

Then comes Liu-Liu asleep on his pony, his mouth wide open, and his tongue sticking out.

My empty chair follows, and Chin-Tai sits asleep amongst his pillows behind.

I sent Chung-Erh on to get the house at Ch'êng-Tu ready for me, and he disappeared behind some trees, sitting all askew on a saddle with a broken tree, thumping his pony with a big stick, while the Ma-Fu ran behind.

Two branches of a river were crossed before entering Han-Chou; one by a bridge of stone piles, with stones laid lengthways for the roadway; the other by a covered wooden bridge, one hundred and twenty-eight yards long, where, on both sides, hawkers sat with little stalls, selling all sorts of things.

There are three inns in this town, but there were Chinese gentlemen staying in the best room at all three, and I had to put up with inferior accommodation, which a week before I should have considered the height of luxury. There was the usual abominable stench, but by the aid of carbolic acid I managed to counteract it.

I began to think that vile smells could not be so unhealthy as we civilised people imagine; for the Chinese, who spend their lives amongst sewers, and die in the odour of cesspits, seem to get on well enough.

They have certainly wonderful ideas with regard to dirt and the fitness of things; I met a man who was out collecting dung, which he picked up on the road with a sort of hoe-shaped instrument; he had the usual bamboo over his shoulder, with a basket at each end; in one of these he put what he picked up, and in the other he had sweet cakes for sale. No Chinaman would ever dream that there was any nasty idea

about this, but would remark with Petrucio that 'dainties are all Cates.'

When the Chou heard that the inns were all occupied, he sent to offer me a house; but it was now six o'clock, so I thanked him much, and said I could manage for a few hours where I was.

The Chou sent more fowls, more sauce, cakes, and Chinese macaroni, of which I had by this time such quantities that I might have set up a restaurant with an excellent chance of success.

June 20.—We marched from Han-Chou over the rich and fertile plain, every step we advanced bringing us more and more into the well-watered country; and after about six miles, rivulets full to the brim ran along the sides of the road, which crossed a stream every ten minutes. Some few of these brooks were almost large enough to be called rivers, and there was plenty of water in all of them.

As I passed under the numerous covered wooden bridges, with the hucksters sitting at the sides selling their goods, I thought of old Marco Polo, who must have marched from Mien-Chou over the identical road I traversed.

At Hsin-Tu-Hsien I was met in the suburbs by an official, who brought me the card of the Hsien with his compliments, and conducted me into a magnificent house just inside the gates on the left-hand side.

This was the Kung-Kuan, or official rest-house for any officers of State who may travel this way. It was a very fine building, with courts and good trees; and there were three or four servants about the place eager to attend to my wants.

Huc has described the Kung-Kuan (or 'palais communal,' as he called it) at Chien-Chou, and if this was not quite up to his flowery description, the con-

trast to the mountain huts to which we had been accustomed was sufficiently strong to make his brilliant eulogium not very inappropriate.

The Hsien then sent embroidered cushions for the chairs, and a Chinese red table-cloth. These are not put over the table as we put ours, but are hung in front to give an imposing appearance as a visitor enters.

Soon after, bedding also arrived; and, as the place was so clean and quiet, I really regretted that I was not going to stay here for the night.

After receiving the inevitable duck and fowl, masses of sweetmeats and bundles of macaroni that would have puzzled a Neapolitan, the process of changing Tinc-Chais was gone through for the last time.

First comes Chin-Tai with a book, in which the names of all the individuals are written. Well knowing that there are plenty of curious eyes about, I examine this attentively, as if the Chinese characters were all familiar to me as English writing, and I signify to Chin-Tai that the departing Tinc-Chais may come in. They all enter, kneel on one knee, knock their foreheads on the ground, and then go away.

In a few minutes more, another book, with the names of the new Tinc-Chais, is brought. These are introduced in their turn; they also knock their heads, and then retire.

Then Chin-Tai goes away and gives pieces of silver to the headman, and strings of cash to the Tinc-Chais. Having received these, they again solicit the honour of being admitted into the presence of the great Excellency, that they may thank his honour for his munificence. This I permit, and when all is over 'I extend my hand to them thus,' and feel almost as great an impostor as Malvolio.

Leaving this, we marched the remaining distance over a beautifully-watered country, where the crops looked splendid.

Six miles from Hsin-Tu-Hsien, a low red spur comes down to the road, the country is again slightly undulating, and not quite so well watered. I noticed a great quantity of chillies with their long green leaves and white flowers, but otherwise there was no change in the crops until we arrived at the outskirts of Ch'êng-Tu.

On this side the suburbs are about one mile and one third long, and consist of a row of houses on each side of the road, with extensive-walled vegetable-gardens behind.

Here were the usual eating and drinking shops, and the number of cakes and pies made of wheaten flour, bean-flour, and flour from all kinds of grain, seemed greater than ever. Indeed, it is impossible to conceive how all the quantities of these, and of sticks of sugar-cane, and a kind of blanc-mange made from beans or rice, ever find mouths to eat them.

At length we turned into the familiar quiet street. A few paces more brought us to our door, where Chung-Erh was waiting to receive us. The trip was finished, and I was not sorry to find myself once again in the little house, and to have some rest, and time for quiet writing.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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